



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF
GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS



International Students: Vital to Our National Strength and International Competitiveness

In a nation built by immigrants, international students represent the brightest and most-skilled individuals among them. Coming from all corners of the world, what international students bring to our nation is more than their diversity: it is a **continuous pool of brilliant, innovative and industrious minds** willing to nourish and contribute to their host country, the United States of America.

Welcoming international students to study and stay can benefit our nation in an immeasurable way. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, international students have contributed to our economy with **\$39 billion** in 2017 alone; more than that, international students have created/supported nearly **half a million U.S. jobs** as the result of economic benefits; and **1 in 5 billion-dollar startups** in the U.S. were founded by former international students. Besides economic factors, international students also greatly boost **research capital** and **scientific advancement** in STEM fields, **preparing our domestic students** for the increasingly complex global challenges with their international perspective. Finally, many domestic STEM programs depend on a reliable influx of international students, and these **programs are in danger of closing without international students**.

Efforts to address immigration should take into consideration the years of dedication shown by these students. Many of them have been separated from their extended families for years, have laid down roots in our country, and have adopted not just our ways of living, but also our values and ideals. **Fairness demands that we recognize their sacrifice and contributions as well as the investment that taxpayers have dedicated to their training.** Fairness demands that we reserve spots for them.

Please consider the following proposals

Support an amendment to **S. 386 / H.R. 1044, the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2019** that would prioritize applicants who have earned advanced degrees in the US:

- Annually reserve **half of all EB-2 visas for applicants who have (1) earned advanced degrees from the United States and (2) have spent at least 5 years in the country.** We refer to these reserved positions as domestically-earned EB-2 visas.
- Once the backlog for petitioners with domestically-earned EB-2 visas has cleared, **priority for these visas be given to others with US-earned advanced degrees**, regardless of country of origin.

Support and co-sponsor **S.1744 - Keep STEM Talent Act of 2019.**

Oppose attempts to challenge the existence of **Optional Practical Training** and support efforts to expand this program.

Investigate the increasing **F-1 student visa and OPT processing delays.**