



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

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Organization: *National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS)*

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National Graduate Student Organization Calls on the White House to Support OPT & H-1B to Strengthen Academia and the Economy

On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) will host a national Message Congress Campaign, **#OPTandH1BforUandMe**, to urge the White House and the U.S. Congress to support the [H-1B Visa](#) and [Optional Practical Training](#) (OPT) programs. Recently, there have been calls to suspend the OPT and H-1B programs and it is rumored that the White House will soon take action.

On May 7th, Senators Tom Cotton (R-AR), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Charles E. Grassley (R-IA), and Josh Hawley (R-MO) sent a joint [letter](#) to the White House which included a proposal to suspend the [H-1B Visa](#) and [Optional Practical Training](#) (OPT) programs for one year because of the current COVID-19 crisis. The rationale provided for suspending the programs is that they will have “taken jobs that would otherwise go to unemployed Americans”.

NAGPS strongly opposes the recommendations made in the Senators’ letter and any actions taken to suspend the OPT and H-1B programs for the following reasons:

1. OPT and H-1B workers will not be in competition with American workers in the job sectors most severely affected by COVID-19.
2. Statistics show that the OPT and H-1B programs create jobs for American workers and contribute to a strong economy. Suspending these programs would be catastrophic to the U.S. economy, job creation, and its global competitiveness.
3. The caliber of higher education in the U.S. would suffer as a result of reduced international student enrollment.

NAGPS members, partners, and allies will participate in a message Congress campaign this Wednesday, June 3, 2020. NAGPS will also continue to engage with the White House and the U.S. Congress in the coming weeks to ensure that the OPT and H-1B programs that are so important to growing a strong economy, job creation, and a strong Academia, continue to receive support.

See the [NAGPS full statement on OPT and H-1B](#).

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