International Graduate Students Talking Points

Request: *Ensure that federal policies promote the U.S. as a competitive and welcoming environment for international graduate students.*

For decades, the United States has been hailed as a premier destination for higher education. International students from across the globe seek out the U.S. to engage in academic and research pursuits. Recent policies stemming from both Congress and the Administration could make it difficult, if not impossible, for certain international students to pursue graduate education in the United States. The effects of a bottle-necked international student pipeline would have negative consequences for not only students and U.S. institutions, but also for the U.S. research and economic enterprise and the American people. Therefore, it is imperative the U.S. continues to attract top talent and embrace our international student community.

- According to NAFSA: Association of International Educators, international students and their families **contributed approximately $41 billion and more than 458,000 jobs to the U.S. economy** during the 2018-2019 academic year.[1]

- **International students are carefully vetted before arriving in the United States**. CGS recognizes the importance of upholding national security, however, policies that unnecessarily restrict the flow of international students disintegrates our nation's reputation and can disincentivize prospective students from choosing the U.S. as their destination.

- International students represent a variety of cultures that are instilled into the campus community. This provides both international and domestic students opportunities to learn from one another while engaging in problem-solving and discovery. More than ever**, molding a future workforce that is diverse, collaborative, and globalized** is imperative to the U.S. economy.

- The U.S. should encourage the retention of international students who receive their graduate degree at U.S. institutions. Research from the Business Roundtable shows that **55% of America's billion-dollar startups had at least one immigrant founder**.[2] International students who stay in the U.S. to work prove to be highly entrepreneurial, thus creating additional jobs for domestic workers.

- America's ability to remain at the forefront of global competitiveness, including its research enterprise, **is not complete without the contributions of international students, scholars, and researchers**. This is particularly true in STEM fields where other countries are continuing to expand their scientific and technological footprint.
    - A CRS report includes 2017 survey data from the National Science Foundation which show that "**72% of foreign doctorate recipients were still in the United States 10 years after receiving their degrees**," with China (90%) and India (83%) at higher rates than European counterparts (69%).[3]
    - According to NSF, among those working in science and engineering, "**41% of maste'rs degree holders and 36% of doctorate degree holders are foreign born**."[4] Extending H-1Bs to those who receive their master's/doctoral degree in the U.S. will help ensure a robust STEM workforce.

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[1] NAFSA: Association of International Educators. NAFSA international student economic value tool. Retrieved from: https://www.nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/nafsa-international-student-economic-value-tool-v2.

[2] Business Roundtable. The economic impact of curbing the optional practical training program. Retrieved from: https://www.businessroundtable.org/policy-perspectives/immigration/economic-impact-curbing-optional-practical-training-program?utm_campaign=latitude%28s%29&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20newsletter.

[3] Congressional Research Service. (2019). Foreign STEM students in the United States. Retrieved from: https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11347

[4] National Science Foundation. (2018). Science and engineering indicators 2018. Retreived from: https://nsf.gov/statistics/2018/nsb20181/digest/sections/u-s-s-e-workforce-trends-and-composition.