

Senate Issue Brief

NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

High-Skilled Immigration Reform

Request

NAFSA supports creating an immigration process that serves our nation's current and future needs and strengthens our educational institutions. Although we recognize that congressional action is unlikely this year, we continue to experience the detrimental effects of a broken immigration system. Immigration reform is needed if we are to ensure that the United States remains competitive for the world's talented international students and scholars and that this nation remains a land of opportunity, equality, and freedom for all. When immigration reform is again considered, we ask that it reflects the principles outlined below.

NAFSA supports immigration reform solutions that:

- Welcome foreign students and expand “dual intent”—now available to certain high-skilled professionals—to remove the requirement that in order to obtain a visa and study in the United States, students must prove that they have no intention of staying, working, and contributing to our economy and local communities after they graduate.
- Create direct paths to green cards for those students who have the education and skills needed in our economy and have employers willing to sponsor them.
- Allow spouses and children of foreign students and scholars to engage in study and work opportunities.
- Make more green cards available, end per-country limits, and eliminate the green card backlog.
- Prioritize predictable processing times and embrace technological improvements that improve immigration services.
- Provide a path to citizenship for DREAMers.

NAFSA *does not* support immigration reform measures that:

- Make high-skilled immigrant opportunities available only to those with STEM degrees.
- Limit opportunities for foreign students to engage in experiential learning during their studies or after graduating from U.S. higher education institutions.
- Bar spouses and children of foreign students and scholars from working or studying.
- Undermine the United States' history and strength as a nation that welcomes immigrants of all types, from all parts of the world.

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More Information

NAFSA immigration priorities and resources: nafsa.org/immigration

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March 2016