Keep STEM Talent Act of 2025 (S. 1233/H.R. 2627)

Ask: We urge members of Congress to cosponsor and pass the Keep STEM Talent Act of 2025 to create a direct path to green card status for U.S. advanced STEM degree graduates (master's and higher) and exempt them from the annual green card caps.

International students are a driving force behind U.S. leadership in research and innovation, both on college campuses and in the workplace. More than a quarter of all billion-dollar startups in this country were founded by international students. During the 2024-2025 academic year, they generated nearly $40 billion for the U.S. economy and supported 309,409 jobs. However, these numbers are declining along with declining international student enrollment in the United States.

Other countries are working hard to attract international talent. A potential path to employment and an option to remain in the country permanently after graduation would be a powerful incentive for international students to choose the U.S. to study and stay and contribute to our country. The bicameral, bipartisan Keep STEM Talent Act does this for a key segment of international students while also addressing a pressing labor shortage in the U.S. economy. The bill:

- provides a path to permanent residency to international students who have a STEM advanced degree (master's level and higher) from a U.S. college or university and exempts them from the annual green card caps, and
- expands dual intent for these students so they will no longer have to prove they will not stay beyond graduation.

The direct path to green card provision in the bill requires that the students be employed in their area of study, be paid higher than the median wage in the location and prove to the U.S. Department of Labor that there is no U.S. worker ready, willing, and able to do the job. The bill also adds a requirement that international students already in the United States who seek to pursue a master's or PhD STEM degree undergo a vetting process that is equivalent to that of an international student applying for a visa from outside the United States.

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