Higher Education Requests Guidance on International Students

In a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, the higher education community formally requested guidance from the U.S. Department of State for the 1 million international students currently studying at U.S. institutions, and for those students anticipating studying in the U.S. in the fall of 2020. While the State Department has already issued guidance and flexibility for current international students and J-1 scholars, the community is anticipating issues that will require additional direction.

Specifically, the request asks for an end to the suspension of visa premium processing, and to waive the in-person interview requirement for F-1 and M-1 visa applicants during the COVID-19 crisis as the Department did for H-2 applicants. Lastly, it asks the State Department to grant flexibility and extend F-1 status following graduation dates to allow students time and flexibility to make safe decisions on returning to their home countries.

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