

STANFORD
UNIVERSITY



MARC TESSIER-LAVIGNE
President

June 11, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

I appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Roundtable you hosted earlier this year on the issues of international research collaboration and maintaining an appropriate balance between openness and security. I also value our continued discussions with your Science and Technology Advisor Mung Chiang on these important issues. Given the President's recent proclamation that placed new restrictions on the entry of certain students and researchers from the People's Republic of China, I wanted to follow-up with you to once again share my concerns related to international students and scholars and the impact of federal policies.

The international exchange of people and ideas is essential to the discovery and transmission of knowledge. As you develop the policies and procedures required under the President's recent proclamation, I strongly urge you to narrowly tailor its impact, and ensure that all legitimate students and scholars from China remain welcome to come to the United States. I also want to reiterate that I appreciate the ongoing concern of the federal government in protecting intellectual property and safeguarding American economic and national security. Stanford remains vigilant in addressing these concerns. It is my hope that you will be vigilant in assuring that federal efforts do not bleed into something more insidious: a blanket restriction of people based on their country of origin or their heritage.

Fulfilling our mission as a university depends upon the presence and participation of people from all over the world, from all walks of life. As the Administration considers additional changes to nonimmigrant visas, I respectfully urge the rejection of any policies that include blanket limitations, revocations or eliminations of visas for international students and scholars, including J, F, and H1-B visas, as well as programs like Optional Practical Training that encourage the gifted minds of the world to choose to study in America. Eliminating or scaling back programs such as Optional Practical Training will have an immediate effect on the scientific workforce and our ability to persuade international students to come to the United States.

Office of the President

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The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo

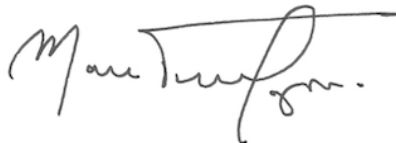
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Unfortunately, over the past several years our international students and scholars have found it increasingly difficult to enter the United States. More recently, the heated rhetoric that surrounds COVID-19 and the current immigration debate has understandably created significant angst within our international student community. What is needed are clear signals from you and the State Department that the United States welcomes international students, scholars, and researchers. Once embassies and consulates reopen, I ask that the State Department give international students and scholars priority in the visa appointment process and consider ways to speed and ease the consideration of their visas.

Our rich international community of students and scholars is an incredible strength. I look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the ability of talented people from around the globe to contribute to the work being done to create a brighter future for our nation and our world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Tessier-Lavigne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the top.

Marc Tessier-Lavigne

cc: Mung Chiang, Science and Technology Advisor to the Secretary