



May 5, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We represent the sponsors, businesses, and industries that recruit, host, and support Exchange Visitor Program participants every year. We are concerned that Section 6 of the April 22 Presidential proclamation suspending immigration, which directs an Administration review of nonimmigrant programs to potentially restrain visas that may affect the economy, may include the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. The Exchange Visitor Program is a cultural exchange, not a work program. We urge the Administration to exclude the Exchange Visitor Program from any future executive actions suspending employment-based immigration.

We appreciate the Administration's support over the past four years of people-to-people diplomacy programs. As you may know, a vast majority of Exchange Visitor Program participants cite cultural exchange as the primary factor for taking part in the program. Seventy five percent of cultural exchange participants, on average, developed a more positive opinion of the U.S. in general after their program experience. Many become community, business, and political leaders when they return home. Their understanding and affinity for the United States supports our diplomatic efforts worldwide, which is especially important during challenging times.

Moreover, Exchange Visitor Program participants support our economy by enabling year-round American employment in local communities and among families. These programs are important to American businesses as many host employers have unique needs, such as being located in rural, low population areas. Families also benefit, for example, from having au pairs who provide live-in child support and cultural enrichment. Additionally, cultural exchange programs such as Camp Counselor, Intern and Trainee, and Summer Work Travel combined contribute more than \$1.2 billion to the American economy each year. By law, these participants do not displace American workers.

We support the U.S. Department of State taking into consideration the situation on the ground in the United States and abroad when it decides how to enable international exchange programs during the pandemic. Decisions about travel from countries abroad and the viability of programs here in the United States should continue to be tied to how those respective areas are dealing with COVID-19. As states and localities decide how they will



begin reopening their economies, we hope reestablishing people-to-people diplomacy will be a part of that effort.

Again, we thank the Administration for its support of cultural exchange programs and urge that these J-1 visa programs not be included in any future executive actions suspending employment-based immigration.

Sincerely,

Alliance for International Exchange, Washington, D.C.
AFS-USA, New York, NY
AIESEC United States, New York, NY
AIFS Foundation, Stamford, CT
Alliance Abroad Group, Austin, TX
American English Institute - University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.
American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS), Stamford, CT
American Work Adventures, Petaluma, CA
AMIDEAST, Washington, D.C.
Amity Institute, San Diego, CA
AquaSafe Pool Management, Inc., Hanover, MD
ASSE International Student Exchange Programs, Laguna Beach, CA
Au Pair in America, Stamford, CT
AuPairCare, San Francisco, CA
Avista Resort, North Myrtle Beach, SC
Ayusa, San Francisco, CA
Beach Subs of SC Inc. dba Jimmy Johns, Myrtle Beach, SC
BelCham (Belgian-American Chamber of Commerce), New York, NY
BritishAmerican Business, New York, NY
Camp America, Stamford, CT
CCUSA, San Rafael, CA
Compass Student Insurance, Princeton, NJ
Concordia Language Villages, Moorhead, MN
Council of American Overseas Research Centers, Washington, D.C.
Council of International Programs USA, Chagrin Falls, OH
Council on Standards for International Education Travel (CSIET), Alexandria, VA
CSB International Inc., Bay Shore, NY
Cultural Academic Student Exchange, Inc., Montclair, NJ
Cultural Care Au Pair, Cambridge, MA
Cultural Homestay International, San Rafael, CA
Cultural Vistas, New York, NY

Destination Door County, Door County, WI
Eastham Chamber of Commerce, Eastham, MA
Educational Resource Development Trust, Santa Monica, CA
EF High School Exchange Year, Cambridge, MA
EnglishUSA, Marietta, GA
EurAupair Intercultural Child Care Programs, Laguna Beach, CA
Face the World Foundation, Petaluma, CA
Founders Group International, Myrtle Beach, SC
French-American Chamber of Commerce, New York, NY
German American Chamber of Commerce California, Inc., San Diego, CA
Global Educational Concepts, Nashville, TN
Global Secutive, LLC, Princeton, NJ
Global Ties U.S., Washington, D.C.
Go Au Pair, Murray, UT
Grande Shores Ocean Resort, North Myrtle Beach, SC
GreatAuPair, LLC, Austin, TX
Greenheart International, Chicago, IL
Gurney's Montauk, Montauk, NY
Gurney's Newport, Newport, RI
Gurney's Star Island, Montauk, NY
Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk, VA
High Sierra Pools, Arlington, VA
Hostelling International USA, Silver Spring, MD
ICCE, Inc. (International Culture & Career Exchange), Los Angeles, CA
iEARN-USA, New York, NY
InterExchange, New York, NY
International Exchange of North America (IENA), Hackettstown, NJ
International Student Exchange Inc., Bay Shore, NY
International Trainee Network, Los Angeles, CA
Intrax, San Francisco, CA
IREX, Washington, D.C.
La Playa Carmel, Carmel by the Sea, CA
Little River Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center, Little River, SC
MAST International - University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce and CVB, Myrtle Beach, SC
Myrtle Beach Area Hospitality Association, Myrtle Beach, SC
National Ski Areas Association, Lakewood, CO
Ocean Plaza Ocean Front Motel, Myrtle Beach, SC
Odyssey International Exchange, Los Angeles, CA
One To World, New York, NY
Pan Atlantic Exchanges, Portland, ME

Pan Atlantic Foundation, Portland, ME
Park City Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau, Park City, UT
Participate Learning, Chapel Hill, NC
Polynesian Ocean Front Hotel, Myrtle Beach, SC
Pool and Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA), Alexandria, VA
Prince Resort, North Myrtle Beach, SC
Seaside Resort, North Myrtle Beach, SC
Sheraton Le Meridien Charlotte, Charlotte, NC
Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center Hotel, Myrtle Beach, SC
Smaller Earth, Inc., Austin, TX
Southwestern Advantage, Nashville, TN
Spirit Cultural Exchange, Oak Park, IL
STS Foundation, Concord, MA
STS Global Studies, Concord, MA
Sweetwater Pools, Tucker, GA
Teachers Council, Inc., Annapolis, MD
The Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva, WI
The Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, MI
The Greenbrier Resort, White Sulphur Springs, WV
The St. Regis Aspen, Aspen, CO
The W Aspen, Aspen, CO
The Washington Center, Washington, D.C.
The Westin Monache Resort, Mammoth Lakes, CA
Towers at North Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, SC
Vacation Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, SC
Viking Ocean Front Motel, Myrtle Beach, SC
Virginia Beach Hotel Association, Virginia Beach, VA
Virginia Beach Restaurant Association, Virginia Beach, VA
Winkler Pool Management, Inc., Hyattsville, MD
Wonderworks Attractions, Orlando, FL
World Learning, Washington, D.C. and Brattleboro, VT
World Wide Cultural Exchange, Inc., Valencia, CA
Zuma Restaurant, Miami, FL and Las Vegas, NV