

AG Kaul: Reacts to Trump administration changing new visa rule for international students following lawsuit filing

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MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today released the following statement after the Trump Administration withdrew the policy that yesterday, a coalition of 18 attorneys general including AG Kaul filed a lawsuit to stop.

“I’m very happy the Trump administration has withdrawn this harmful policy,” said AG Kaul. “This is a major win for not only colleges, universities, and students, but also for public health and the economy.”

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court in Massachusetts against the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), challenged what the attorneys general called the federal government’s “cruel, abrupt, and unlawful action to expel international students amidst the pandemic that has wrought death and disruption across the United States.” The lawsuit sought an injunction to stop the entire rule from going into effect.

The lawsuit included 39 declarations from a variety of institutions affected by the new rule, including information from University of Wisconsin – Madison, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, and University of Wisconsin – Stout.

Harms to Wisconsin schools included:

- At UW-Stevens Point, 84 international students from 20 countries pay more than \$2.2 million in tuition.
- At UW- Stout, 97 international students contribute nearly \$2.7 million in tuition.
- UW-Milwaukee could lose up to half of the approximately 1,200 international students, who pay approximately \$21.5 million in tuition, and \$5.1 million in housing, in addition to the money these students spend at businesses supporting the local economy.
- In 2019, international students at UW-Madison paid approximately \$161.8 million in tuition and fees, and \$18.8 million in housing.
 - 1,057 course sections, or 26.5% of courses, are taught by international teaching assistants.
- UW-Green Bay has 80 enrolled students with F-1 visas who contribute approximately \$1.4 million in tuition and fees every year. Green Bay could lose up to \$831,100 if its 32 newly admitted students who require F-1 visas are not admitted to the county. The rule may also severely disrupt Green Bay's Division 1 athletics, particularly in Men's soccer.

The lawsuit detailed the substantial harms that the new rule placed on schools and students. It also alleged that the federal government's actions are arbitrary, capricious, and an abuse of discretion because they reversed previous guidance without explanation, input, or rationale - in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act - and failed to consider the need to protect public health and safety amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.