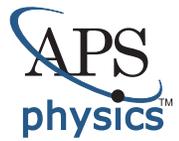


International STEM PhD Applicants: A Worrying Decline



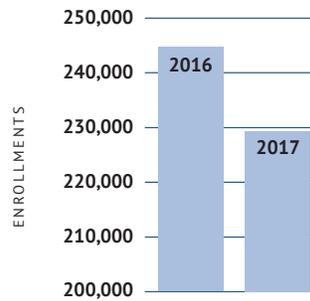
ACTION

Support amending Sections 101 and 214 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow for F-1 visa holders to express “dual intent” – a policy provision that has bipartisan support in Congress.

International Applications to U.S.-Based STEM Programs are Declining

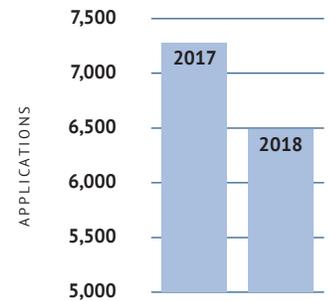
- In 2017, there was a sharp drop in the number of enrollments of international graduate students in STEM fields. In 2018, a survey of 49 of the largest physics PhD programs at U.S. institutions found that there was a nearly 12% decline in international applications between 2017 and 2018.
- These declining applications along with other proposed visa policy changes indicate that STEM enrollments are likely to continue to drop.

International Graduate Students Enrolled in STEM Fields



Source: NSF Indicators 2018

International Applications to Largest U.S. Physics PhD Programs



Source: APS

This Decline in Applications Negatively Affects the U.S. Economy

- According to a 2012 ITIC report, research has found that “every foreign-born student who graduates from a U.S. University with an advanced degree and stays to work in STEM has been shown to create on average 2.62 jobs for American workers – often because they help lead in innovation, research, and development.”
- Based on economic analysis performed by NAFSA, over the course of the 2016-2017 academic year, international students and their families at U.S. universities and colleges contributed \$36.9 billion to the U.S. economy.
- Immigrants were founders of 18% of all Fortune 500 companies, including:



Dual Intent F-1 Visas Help Solve the Problem

- Under the current Immigration and Nationality Act, the F-1 is a non-immigrant visa that requires that students prove they are only in the U.S. on a temporary basis and have no intention to stay after they graduate. By contrast, dual intent visas (such as K, L and O visas) allow holders to have legal intent to immigrate.
- The decline in international STEM applications could be reversed by allowing students in STEM fields to express dual intent on F-1 visa applications. International students would be incentivized to bring their talents to the U.S. with the possibility of acquiring gainful employment in America post-graduation which would contribute to our economy.
- Talented international students that have received an education in the U.S. would be able to stay – helping U.S. companies fill their currently unmet STEM workforce needs – rather than being sent back to their countries of origin where they would directly compete against Americans.

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