



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May Leads NY Senate Letter to ICE on Behalf of International Students

RACHEL MAY July 10, 2020

| ISSUE: **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, HOW COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED HIGHER EDUCATION**



Syracuse, NY - Today, Senator Rachel May (D-Onondaga, Madison, Oneida) sent a letter to the U.S. Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) Acting Director Matthew Albence, expressing outrage and disappointment at the latest guidance from the agency on international college students. The letter strongly encourages the agency to reverse its decision and extend the previous policy of allowing international students to enjoy the same privileges their classmates enjoy by taking online classes at their home institutions during

this crisis.

The guidance would force holders of F-1 and M-1 student visas to transfer institutions or leave the country if they are enrolled at universities and colleges offering online-only courses. This guidance provides *no* benefit to public health or economic growth. In fact, the opposite is true -- in the midst of an unprecedented public health and economic crisis, this misguided attempt to force international students out of the country will cause further harm. The United States hosts more than 1 million international students annually. In 2019 alone, New York's colleges and universities welcomed 124,000 of these students. NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, estimates that international students studying in the US generate \$40 billion in economic activity and support more than 400,000 jobs annually. International students also contribute substantially to the continued viability of colleges and universities.

"My district is home to 9 institutions of higher education," **said Senator May**. "Students come to Central New York from all over the world to take advantage of our tremendous educational resources. Not only is this decision particularly cruel to the thousands of international students who reside here, but it is also short-sighted and damaging for both our economy and society. I urge the Acting Director to reconsider this decision and allow our international students to enjoy the same privilege of being at their home institutions while taking online classes."

The letter was signed by 30 New York State Senators.

#