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**CITY OF NEW YORK JOINS AMICUS BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF HARVARD, MIT
AGAINST U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

NYC supports blocking federal policy that would deny visas to international students

NEW YORK—City of New York today announced that it has joined the City of Boston and the City of Los Angeles together with 23 American cities, counties and towns, in the filing of an [amicus brief](#) in the Harvard College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology lawsuit against U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The [lawsuit](#) follows a recently announced policy that would force international students whose classes are fully online this fall as part of their college's COVID-19 safety plan to leave the U.S. or risk deportation.

New York City joins amicus signees to ask the courts to side with Harvard and MIT in granting a preliminary injunction that would block federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s directive to force students on F-1 and M-1 visas to choose between living in the United States and attending the school of their choice.

"This is yet another cruel and senseless immigration policy from the Trump Administration," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "All students are welcome in New York City, and we will continue to ensure that our colleges and universities can reopen based on public health guidance, not threats from the President."

"The over 70,000 international students that live in New York City and study at our colleges and universities enrich our educational institutions, our cultural diversity, as well as our economy. The Trump Administration's attempt to force these institutions to reopen or to have students forcibly removed is both cruel and without regard to the health and safety of campus communities," said **Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs**. "We urge the District Court in Massachusetts to halt this unlawful action and to return to the educational institutions the rightful decision-making that centers the health and safety for all based on accurate and thoughtful local circumstances. International students with questions should reach out to their designated school official for support. For connections to free, safe immigration legal help, students in New York City can call ActionNYC at 1-800-354-0365."

"This latest effort by the Trump Administration is a cold-hearted, senseless and illegal maneuver that puts politics over people," said **Corporation Counsel James E. Johnson**. "Many states are seeing spikes in the number of Covid-19 cases. Pressuring colleges and universities to hold in-person classes instead of following the science and allowing social distancing through online learning can compound the problem and threaten us all. The City of New York has a responsibility to join this effort to beat back this irresponsible and harmful policy in the interest of our immigrant communities and all New Yorkers."

There are over 70,000 international students who call New York City home. These students contribute \$3.26 billion to the economy and support almost 36,000 jobs, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators. New York City is home to approximately 120 colleges and universities, according to the Baruch College/CUNY Weissman Center for International Business.

The amicus brief argues local governments must provide for the health and welfare of its residents, businesses, and institutions. Therefore, it is critical that colleges and universities should make decisions to physically open campuses and resume in-person learning based on scientific research and data and determined by each school's capacity. The federal government's action threatens to upset operational plans that were carefully crafted by colleges and universities in conjunction with local public health officials.

The cities are also asking the court to consider the economic impact of this policy, given the role international students will play in the economic crisis' recovery caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. [Economic estimates](#) show that the one million international students studying at colleges and universities in the U.S. contributed \$41 billion to the U.S. economy and supported 458,290 jobs during the 2018-2019 academic year alone, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

The amicus brief was filed by the Cities of Los Angeles and Boston, together with New York, New York; Albany, N.Y.; Albuquerque, N.M.; Alexandria, Va.; Austin, Texas; Berkeley, Calif.; Cambridge, Mass.; Cameron, Texas; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Cook County, Ill.; Dayton, Ohio; Durham, N.H.; Hartford, Conn.; Iowa City, Iowa; Las Cruces, N.M.; Oakland, Calif.; Pittsburgh; Sacramento, Calif.; Saint Paul, Minn.; Seattle; Santa Clara, Calif.; Amherst, Mass.; and Somerville, Mass. To read the amicus brief, visit [here](#).

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