



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

October 17, 2017

Wisconsin Congressional Delegation

Honorable Members of Congress,

As members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, we want to convey our support for the J-1 summer work and travel program. We urge the U.S. Congressional Delegation to hold this program harmless to changes that could result from the "Buy American and Hire American" executive order issued by President Trump in April.

The stated goal of this program is to provide "foreign students with an opportunity to live and work in the United States during their summer vacation from college or university to experience and to be exposed to the people and way of life in the United States." Many cities across Wisconsin embrace the friendship, culture, and diversity these students bring to our state. In addition, they provide a valuable workforce that helps support Wisconsin's economy. A successful example of this program in our communities is the \$1.3 billion impact it has in the Wisconsin Dells area. Wisconsin Dells is home to around 5,600 permanent residents, but welcomes approximately 4 million visitors annually. Without the workforce that the summer work and travel program provides, there would be an insufficient amount of people to fill the jobs needed to accommodate these visitors.

Currently, there are 10,136 people participating in the J-1 program in Wisconsin. Of the 14 programs that make up the J-1 program, the summer work and travel program is by far the largest with almost 6,000 participants. Each of these students must be sufficiently proficient in English, currently enrolled in post-secondary education, and have prior work experience.

Overall, it would be difficult to replace the experience and workforce this program provides, and we feel the termination of the J-1 summer work and travel program would create a negative impact for Wisconsin. We ask that you resist any changes that would curtail the summer work and travel program.

Sincerely,

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State Representative
41st Assembly District

Luther Olsen
State Senator
14th Senate District

Jimmy Anderson
State Representative
47th Assembly District

Dan Feyen
State Senator
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Frank Lasee

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