

THE BALTIMORE BANNER

Maryland colleges back lawsuit to halt Trump visa cancellations

Ellie Wolfe

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The University System of Maryland joined others to sign an amicus brief to stop the Trump administration from revoking student visas

University System of Maryland, where at least 4 students lost visas, joined the legal battle

Three Maryland institutions signed on to support a lawsuit against the federal government on Thursday over its revocation of student visas.

The University System of Maryland, Goucher College and Loyola University Maryland signed an [amicus brief](#) supporting a preliminary injunction to stop the Trump administration from revoking student visas without cause and arresting, detaining and deporting noncitizen students and faculty.

“The [visa revocation] policy has created a climate of fear among non-citizens at American colleges and universities,” the amicus brief states. “Seeing these actions, non-citizen students and faculty report being scared that they, too, will be targeted by the administration.”

Eighty-six institutions of higher education and associations signed the brief, submitted by the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration in support of an American Association of University Professors’ lawsuit.

Four international graduate students at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, [have lost their student visas](#), along with an unspecified number of students at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The Johns Hopkins University, where [“approximately a dozen”](#) international graduate students and recent graduates have lost their visas, did not sign the amicus brief. The university declined a request for comment.

In an [op-ed for the student newspaper](#), Stephen Gange, the executive vice provost for academic affairs, and James Brailer, the associate vice provost for international students and scholar services, wrote that they share the “serious concerns arising from recent changes in federal immigration policies and enforcement activities and understand the anxiety these changes instill in our community members and their families, here and abroad.”

Hopkins previously told faculty and staff [not to intervene in potential ICE activity](#) on campus.

No Goucher students have had their visas revoked yet, according to Kent Devereaux, the college’s president in a message to students.

The college feels “strongly that the recent deportations of international students is an abdication of fundamental American values such as free speech and the open exchange of ideas,” Devereaux said.

A spokesperson for Loyola did not respond to a comment request and did not share whether any of the university’s students had their visas revoked.

According to the amicus brief, as of Tuesday, the Trump administration has revoked the visas of over 500 non-citizens, “including many international students, in some cases based on alleged participation in campus activism or social media activity deemed contrary to administration policies.”

Spokespeople at Hopkins, UMD and UMBC have all said they are not aware of why the student visas were revoked and could not say for certain that any of the students were involved in campus activism.

The visa revocation policy, the amicus brief argues, threatens to “significantly reduce” the number of foreign students and non-citizens seeking to attend U.S. colleges.

[Student activists recently gathered](#) at the Hopkins campus, calling on Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, Attorney General Anthony Brown

and state legislators to protect students from federal immigration officers.

“Our students are scared,” said University System of Maryland Chancellor Jay Perman at a Maryland Board of Regents meeting on Friday morning. “Not just visa-holding students, but any student with noncitizen status.”

There are 10,192 international students at universities within the system. That includes 6,367 graduate students and 3,825 undergraduates.

Perman said he’s spoken to students who have started to carry their passports with them at all times. One, he said, now carries her green card with her.

The immigration clinics at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and the University of Baltimore law schools have offered their services to affected students, Perman added.

Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, the president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, said at the meeting on Friday morning that he has advised faculty not to travel overseas if they don’t have to.

“I’m a U.S. citizen, and I carry my U.S. passport card in my wallet, because you never know,” he

said.

Miralles-Wilhelm said that because he has an accent, and his first name is Fernando, he tries to take extra precautions.

“That’s been my advice to our campus, to our faculty and to our students,” he said. “I think that’s a rational approach to dealing with this.”

About the Education Hub

This reporting is part of The Banner’s Education Hub, community-funded journalism that provides parents with resources they need to make decisions about how their children learn. [Read more.](#)

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