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May 30, 2024

Patrick J. Lechleitner
Deputy Director and Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20536

Katrina W. Berger
Executive Associate Director
Homeland Security Investigations
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Mr. Lechleitner and Ms. Berger,

We write to express our disapproval of the Biden administration's failed policy decisions that resulted in two Jordanian foreign nationals attempting to breach Marine Corps Base Quantico in Virginia on May 3, 2024. Specifically, we request answers about the foreign national who overstayed his student visa. Said foreign national's student visa was terminated on January 14, 2023, four months after his arrival. However, this foreign national wasn't apprehended until 16 months later when he carried out the attempted breach. It is important to note that these arrests were the result of the military base detaining the Jordanian nationals and alerting ICE, and not the result of a proactive ICE operation.

We are concerned someone who applied and was granted a student visa was conspiring with an illegal immigrant to breach a military base. This is a symptom of a now widespread issue - Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) disregarding the national security risk of allowing foreign nationals to remain in the country illegally. We urge ICE to perform its duty to deport individuals who overstay student visas. Currently, ICE is derelict in its statutory duty of immigration enforcement, raising questions of whether its employees should continue receiving a salary.

In 2022, following the termination of their visas:

- 12 percent of the 3,341 Jordanians foreign students did not depart, resulting in 387 overstays;
- 3 percent of the 321,058 Chinese foreign students did not depart, resulting in 9,005 overstays;
- 1.4 percent of the 3,619 Austrian foreign students did not depart, resulting in 51 overstays; and

- 72 percent of the 93 Eritrean students did not depart, resulting in 67 overstays.

As the federal agency responsible for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which issues foreign student visas, we request written responses to the following questions by June 12, 2024:

1. What post-secondary institution did the foreign national attend?
 - a. What type of degree was he pursuing and in what field of study?
2. Did the foreign national drop out or have his enrollment terminated?
 - a. If so, did the school alert Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, which requires schools to report any foreign student “who has failed to maintain status or complete his or her program?”
 - b. If the school didn’t report the student’s change in status as required by regulation, is HSI planning to decertify the school so it can no longer enroll foreign students?
3. Why was the Jordanian foreign student allowed to stay in the country for over a year?
 - a. Was HSI actively looking for him?
 - b. What exactly was going on with his case and immigration status?
4. Was the Jordanian student participating in the controversial Optional Practical Training (OPT) program, which allows foreign students to obtain employment for up to three years beyond graduation?
 - a. If so, for which employer was he allegedly working and did he show up to work? The student told the military base that he was associated with Amazon, which raises the question of whether he reported such employment to HSI in OPT paperwork. The OPT program is ripe for fraud, with many foreign students claiming to work at jobs they don't have.
5. How many foreign students has HSI arrested and removed over the last three years?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jodey Arrington
Member of Congress



Lance Gooden
Member of Congress