

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2020

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Eugene Scalia
Secretary
Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Pompeo, Acting Secretary Wolf, and Secretary Scalia,

We write concerning the President’s “Proclamation Suspending Entry of Aliens Who Present a Risk to the U.S. Labor Market Following the Coronavirus Outbreak,” Proclamation 10052, and its effects on the Utah Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program.

Across Utah, there are nearly 300 DLI schools utilizing over 50 international teachers teaching Chinese, German, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Because of the skills required to teach in a DLI program, many positions do not receive any qualified American applicants, and the programs turn to international teachers as a last resort. Not only do these teachers fill important teaching positions, they also facilitate an exchange of cultures and share their fluency in languages all deemed critical by the U.S. Department of Defense.

While we understand and support the prioritization of American workers, we are concerned that the recent prohibition of J-1 and H-1B visas will put DLI students at a disadvantage this school year – when schools already face uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Utah DLI program utilizes J-1 and H-1B visas to fill teacher openings if, and only if, those positions cannot be filled by American applicants, thus ensuring that international teachers are not replacing American workers.

Because of the importance of education and DLI programs to the future of our nation, we respectfully ask that you consider an exemption to the J-1 and H-1B visa ban for international teachers filling critical DLI teaching positions in programs that have been unsuccessful in filling

the positions with Americans. We believe that the ability to reopen schools safely in the fall and to provide a first-class education is in the national interest of Utah and American families.

Sincerely,

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John R. Curtis
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben McAdams", with a large loop at the top.

Ben McAdams
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Bishop", with a large loop at the top.

Rob Bishop
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Stewart", with a large loop at the top.

Chris Stewart
Member of Congress