

From: "Michael J. Murphy"
To: <recipients deleted for privacy reasons>
Subject: Fwd: CAFSS: Proposed Fee collection article
Date: Fri, 06 Apr 2001 09:54:05 -0500

I would like to see national country student organizations throughout the United States challenge this proposed rule in a court of law. To me, this database does not make sense and only hurts international education in the U.S. I would be unhappy if I were an American student studying overseas and I was put on a list because someone thought that I might be a terrorist. This isn't going to help the U.S. find a terrorists in the student ranks anymore than it would be if we did not have the database.

[Forwarded email by Michael J. Murphy]:

Date: Fri, 06 Apr 2001 10:18:14 -0400
From: Jef Davis
Subject: CAFSS: Proposed Fee collection article
Sender: A list for international educators operated from VPI&SU by

To: INTER-L@LISTSERV.VT.EDU
Reply-to: jef.davis@bc.edu
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Win 9x 4.90; en-US; m18) Gecko/20010131
Netscape6/6.01 X-Accept-Language: en

Colleagues,

The following article from today's electronic Chronicle of Higher Education answers Scott Yonan's question about the latest CIPRIS fee plan. I haven't seen the proposed rule yet, but I hope someone can share it.
-Jef

Lobbyists Blast Plan to Make Foreign Students Bear the Cost of Databank to Track Them

By RON SOUTHWICK

College lobbyists are expressing outrage over a plan by the federal government to collect new fees from foreign students. University officials say the proposed collection system, which would finance a program to monitor students from other countries, could hurt the enrollment of international students and be an unfair hardship to those from the poorest countries.

By early summer -- after the Justice Department and the White House have completed their reviews -- the Immigration and Naturalization Service is expected to publish regulations requiring prospective students from overseas to pay the agency a one-time \$95 fee.

The fee will support a databank to keep track of the addresses and academic status of all foreign students in the United States.

Under the plan, the students would pay over the Internet with a credit card or send a check or money order drawn from an American bank. Both options will be very difficult for those in some countries in Africa and Asia, where computer access is limited and converting currency to dollars is difficult, college lobbyists say.

On Wednesday, the American Council on Education sent a letter to the immigration agency, calling the proposed regulations "a looming disaster" for higher education.

Officials of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Association of American Universities, and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities signed the letter, and Princeton University and Texas A&M University lent their names to the effort as well.

"We believe they have put together a poorly developed fee-collection system," says Terry W. Hartle, senior vice president for government and public affairs for the American Council on Education. "We think it will have the effect of closing off options for many foreign students who might want to study in the U.S."

The government would begin collecting the fees 30 days after the publication of the regulations. College lobbyists say that doesn't allow enough time to inform colleges or potential students of the rules and payment options.

If the rule takes effect this spring, it could keep some students from starting classes in the fall. The government estimates that it may take several weeks for students to receive receipts for their payments. Without proof of payment, lobbyists say, students may not be able to get their visas and enter the United States.

College officials fear that if the application process is too cumbersome for international students, American institutions could lose ground in the growing competition for foreign students, and suffer a severe financial hit as a result.

The United States drew 514,723 students in the 1999-2000 academic year, according to the Institute of International Education, a 5-percent increase over the previous year. (See an article from *The Chronicle*, November 17, 2000.) Australia and Britain are emerging as strong rivals for new students; those countries' foreign enrollments, while much smaller than those in the United States, grew by 30 percent and 12 percent, respectively, in that year.

Initially, the I.N.S. wanted colleges to collect the money from international students. Universities protested, saying it would be very costly and time-consuming. College lobbyists also said institutions did not want to act as tax collectors for the federal government.

Last year, Congress agreed and passed an amendment absolving colleges of that duty.

College lobbyists are focused mostly on how the government plans to collect the money, rather than the merits of the I.N.S.' monitoring system itself. But advocates for foreign students say they would like to scrap the system.

"There is no evidence that foreign students have any more propensity to engage in terrorism than the millions who come into this country for one reason or other every year," said Victor C. Johnson, director of public policy at NAFSA: Association of International Educators.