

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 10, 2011

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20525

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

The Honorable Timothy Geithner
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretaries Napolitano, Geithner and Clinton:

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the associations listed below, I write to request your assistance for Libyan nationals currently studying in the United States on student visas, almost all of whom are fully funded by the Libyan government as sponsored students.

At the current time, there are approximately 2,000 Libyan nationals studying at colleges and universities across the country, many accompanied by their spouses and children. Because of recent events in Libya and the subsequent freezing of assets, these students and their families have been placed in situations of great uncertainty. Given that the dire situation in Libya makes it impossible for them to safely return home, these individuals need an option to maintain their lawful immigration status and to resolve their uncertain funding situation.

It is urgent that these students are provided with some administrative immigration relief as soon as possible, particularly the 190 students on J Visas, which are set to expire on May 31. We urge the Department of Homeland Security to designate Libya for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and in the interim, provide some appropriate administrative remedy for those who would otherwise be required to leave the United States and return to Libya until TPS becomes available.

In addition, it is our understanding that the Obama administration is considering unfreezing Libyan assets in this country for humanitarian purposes. When these funds

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become available, we urge you to use some of them to support Libyan students and exchange visitors currently in the United States. Some colleges and universities have extended funds to provide emergency housing, food and health insurance to these students and their dependents, but they will be unable to support them long-term.

The presence of international students in our colleges and universities adds much to campus learning communities. In light of the uncertain and potentially dangerous situation in their home country, we ask that you move expeditiously to provide assistance to these students and their families in this difficult time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Molly C. Broad".

Molly Corbett Broad
President

MCB/ldw

On behalf of:

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Council on Education

Association of American Universities

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities