

## Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

**<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/internship-program-discriminates-against-ohioans>**

### Public Facing Advocacy Writing

[Skip to main content](#)

CLEVELAND- Today, the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio sent a letter to the Third Frontier Internship Program urging officials to cease discriminating against Ohioans based on their national origin. The program, which pairs Ohio students with high-tech businesses for internships and subsidizes part of the students wages, requires that all participants be U.S. citizens.

The Third Frontier Internship Program seems like a wonderful opportunity for many young people, said ACLU of Ohio Legal Director Jeffrey Gamso. It is troubling that some young people are denied the chance to enrich themselves simply because they are not U.S. citizens, even if they have lived and studied here for years.

Discriminating against Ohioans who are non-citizens also hurts businesses because it limits the pool from which they can draw tech-savvy young people who bring innovation and creativity to the state, added Gamso.

In his letter, Gamso reminded officials that states may not discriminate based on national origin. Additionally, Gamso pointed out that the Third Frontier program is partially funded through the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which specifically stipulates that programs benefiting from it must be open to lawfully residing non-citizens.

The Third Frontier Internship Program has been instituted since 2002, and links college age students with high-tech businesses. The program subsidizes part of the interns wages at the company, and after the student graduates, the business is given the opportunity to hire the student full time. This allows companies access to talented young people and encourages students to stay in Ohio.

This program could be very beneficial for Ohioans, but discriminating against qualified people is not only unconstitutional, it is bad business. Companies need to have access to a wide array of individuals in order to increase innovation, and immigrants have traditionally been a group that has added to our nations ability to compete in the market place, concluded Gamso.

The nonprofit, nonpartisan ACLU of Ohios office is located in Cleveland with community and campus chapters located throughout the state. There are almost 30,000 ACLU members and supporters in Ohio and more than 500,000 nationwide.

Stay informed

2022 ACLU of Ohio