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From: charter morris [<mailto:cmorris@olemiss.edu>]

Sent: Wednesday, February 28, 2007 4:31 PM

To: OSComments

Cc: cmorris@olemiss.edu; jcrobins@olemiss.edu; mjohan@olemiss.edu; twoodard@olemiss.edu

Subject: USCIS-2006-0044 - Objection to new fee increases

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Office of International Programs at the University of Mississippi to express our objection to new fee increases with the USCIS under USCIS-2006-0044.

As the International Programs Advisor for faculty and scholars, I process many forms on behalf of the University in support of our numerous international faculty and scholars.

Under the new Carnegie classifications, the University of Mississippi is a comprehensive, research institution with high research activity. Our university is home to 20 national research centers, including the National Centers for Natural Products Research, Physical Acoustics, and Computational Hydroscience. The research done at the University of Mississippi's main campus brings over \$100 million in grants each year; the Medical Campus in Jackson also attracts another \$100 million in research grants. The international researchers and faculty are key to the function and success of the university. Our research centers rely on international collaboration and attract many researchers, professors, and scholars to the institution. The impact that the international community has on the institution is significant.

The new fee increases will hinder the University of Mississippi's ability to attract prominent researchers and needed faculty and instructors. Some departments with limited budgets, such as Modern Languages, will not be able to afford to support H-1Bs or Permanent Residency for future instructors and faculty. This means that the University of Mississippi will no longer be able to offer the same level of quality education to its students.

Since the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1, 2006, the University of Mississippi has hosted 250 international faculty and researchers on J-1s, H-1Bs, TNs, O-1s, and PRs. The actual monetary impact on the University of Mississippi based on the fee increases could be as much as \$20,000 in additional filing fees for I-129s and I-140s alone. The additional cost to the international faculty and researchers and their families who are seeking Permanent Residency using the I-485 would be around \$50,000, not to mention the many additional thousands of dollars for EAD Cards and Advanced Parole Documents. Again, for many departments and many of the international faculty and researchers, these fees may prove to be one obstacle too many, and we may lose valuable minds to other institutions and to other areas of the world who are developing stronger research facilities such as the European Union, UK, Australia, China, and New Zealand.

We ask that you reconsider the proposed fee increases. A modest increase in fees to cover additional expenses is to be expected, but the near doubling of some fees will devastate our institution's ability to function as a competitive research institution.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Charter Morris
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