

American Society of Mammalogists

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President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

President Trump:

The American Society of Mammalogists (ASM) greatly values the contributions of colleagues from around the globe and we have a long tradition of supporting international students and scholars. Our society benefits from scientific progress, which requires that the world's scientists have unfettered opportunities to interact. This includes opportunities to train and to interact with students from outside of the US. Accordingly, the ASM opposes policies that impede or interfere with such border-free intellectual exchange. The ASM is deeply concerned by the recent decision by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to modify the Student and Exchange Visitor Program ([see here](#)) such that international students (Nonimmigrant F-1 and M1 visas) enrolled in online-only academic programs must leave the United States.

For many institutions, the shift to online pedagogy has been necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This unexpected change is having substantial impacts on higher education and scientific research. If implemented, the new ICE policy would compound these challenges by greatly impeding the academic progress of many students, as well as that of the research labs with which they are associated. It also threatens to impact the ability of US-based institutions to fulfil their mission of pedagogy and intellectual pursuit. Finally, it threatens to undermine the global reputation of the USA as a bastion of support for cutting-edge science and intellectual freedom.

The American Society of Mammalogists supports complete and unfettered access to academic opportunity by our global colleagues. I urge you to reconsider this policy and allow our dedicated student colleagues to continue their education in the USA. I firmly believe that this is in the best interest of the country as well as of these students and the scientific endeavors they pursue.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Kelt, President