



Advocacy and Legislative Affairs Committee Report

Advocacy Com had multiple conf calls since the spring meeting. Originally we had planned to hold DAY ON THE HILL after summer meeting. We had also thought about collaborating with other civil liberty organizations to hold a combined meeting. The agenda was Muslim Ban and civil rights. However after March 15 match day once our matched residents started applying for visas at Islamabad and Karachi, it became alarmingly clear that many of them being refused not only B/1 and B2 but J1. So in an emergency meeting of ADV COM it was decided to hold a DAY ON THE HILL on May 16

It was a short time but Alhamdulillah it was a very successful and productive day. {The details of the day have already been sent to you by YPC}. About 40-50 members attended the meeting, we visited 15 congressional offices and 12 members of the congress and senate staff spoke at our luncheon meeting. Our main agenda was highlighting the J1 refusals and getting sponsorship for the Grad ACT.

Since our DOTH there has been an epidemic of J1 refusals, close to 25 as of this report. This is a very unfortunate situation and one that will not be resolved easily. I feel that it is not an official policy from the state department to refuse visas. That it is some rogue councilor who has taken upon himself and gotten others convinced to refuse visas under section 214. Councilor can refuse visa under this law that the applicant will not return to the country of origin and his decision is final. {At present there is legislation in senate to revoke 214}.

We have explained to the state department that no one J1 visa holder physician has ever disappeared and those who have stayed were are all legal. This is a hard fight.

So far this is what we have done

1. Met with state department officials to explain and request that this trend should stop and the candidates given their visa without reapplying.
2. We are asking our representative to ask the state department to explain the reasons for this epidemic and reverse it and issue visas to our applicants.
3. We have circulated a petition to be signed by our members to be sent to secretary of state.
4. We have retained a lobbyist to facilitate our work at the congressional and state level.

WHAT CAN YOU ALL DO?

- Call your representative daily to ask them to get answers from the state dept and ask them to reverse the trend soon.
- Ask them to cosponsor the GRAD ACT.

Hopefully together we can achieve our goal as we did after 9/11 when we faced the same problem. Hopefully also by the time this report gets to you we may have made headways in this struggle.

*Regards,
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