

July 13, 2020

Dear USC community,

Following last week's government directive requiring international students to take at least one in-person class to maintain their visa status, USC immediately began reaching out to bring together some of the leading research institutions, liberal arts colleges, and public universities in the western United States to block the directive from being enforced. [Today, our powerful coalition of 20 schools filed its own lawsuit against the federal government.](#) Last week, we also joined a broad coalition of universities to file an amicus brief strongly supporting the legal challenge separately brought by Harvard and MIT.

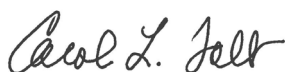
Our country cannot afford to lose the vital diversity of thought and experience international students bring to our universities. At USC, we are preparing the next generation of leaders to enter an increasingly diverse society at a time when inclusion and understanding have never been more important. Our international students are core to our mission.

By issuing this arbitrary and misguided new directive – without any advance warning – the government is forcing international students to make potentially life-altering choices with no apparent consideration for the burdens it places on the students or on higher education itself. It also directly contradicts the guidance offered by the government in March which afforded schools broad flexibility to navigate this pandemic.

We simply cannot stay silent when the government is clearly using our international students as leverage to force a wholesale reopening of college campuses in the midst of a global health crisis with no regard for public health guidance.

Please know that the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff is our chief concern, and we will continue to advocate strongly against any government policy that poses a threat.

Sincerely,



Carol L. Folt
President

cc: President's Senior Leadership Team
Academic Deans
Provost's Leadership Team
Academic Senate
Staff Assembly
GSG President
USG President