

## Writing to Local Media Guide

Below, please find a guide for writing an op-ed/letter to the editor for local media. We encourage you to personalize your letter by sharing your tie to exchange programs, how your business or community benefits from these programs, and the impact of the suspension if J-1 programs are not exempted in the future.

- [Insert personal connection to the program here.]
- On June 22, 2020, the White House issued a proclamation suspending some categories of J-1 visas effective June 24 through December 31, 2020, with the possibility of continuation.
- Cultural exchange programs positively contribute to the United States economy. Exchange Visitor Program participants support year-round American jobs in local communities. Participants also help support and create American jobs by enabling businesses to operate at full capacity.
- The Presidential proclamation will cost, not save, American jobs. The impact on the international exchange community from the pandemic alone is projected to result in losses to our economy of more than \$233 million and nearly 7,000 American jobs.
- [Insert economic and personal benefits of EVPs to your business/community here.]
- The Exchange Visitor Program addresses unique needs in the United States.
- The Exchange Visitor Program is a cultural exchange program. On average, 88% of Exchange Visitor Program participants cite the cultural exchange component, not the work component, as the primary factor in taking part in the program.
- Many international exchange participants become community, business, and political leaders when they return home. 75% of cultural exchange participants, on average, developed a more positive opinion of the U.S. in general after their program experience
- Exchange programs should be exempt from Presidential Proclamation given their role in supporting our diplomatic and national security efforts, in addition to their economic benefits.
- [End with reiteration of personal connection and importance of the programs.]