

不止于平权行动： 致中国留学生与校友的一份倡议书

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND BEYOND: AN OPEN LETTER TO CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND ALUMNI



在美的中国留学生们和校友们，

作为国际学生，我们都有过缺乏学校的支持，作为边缘人难以“融入”主流校园生活的经历。过去十年，美国大学扩招国际学生，来自中国的学生的从2009-10学年的不到13万人增至2019-20学年的超过37万人。多数国际学生是自费上学，成为美国大学和学院的重要收入来源。然而，很多大学并未相应地投资于对国际生的支持上，设立的国际生办公室的职责也仅限于处理签证、移民身份相关问题。因此，很多留学生都有“被当作摇钱树”的感受。

缺乏学校管理层的重视，缺乏相应配套的支持体系，这样的经历不只是国际生才有。第一代大学生，来自于低收入社区的学生，有特殊学习需要的学生，有许多非主流、有不同需求的学生都在以白人、健全人文化为基准设计的教育系统里被忽视与不被支持。中国国际生和其他亚裔学生一起面临着日常生活中的刻板印象和针对亚裔的歧视。大部分校园普遍缺乏种族/民族研究项目和贴近文化和成长背景的心理支持项目。在美国的少数族裔，尤其是黑人和原住民，更是长期被排除在教育系统外。教育资源的分配不公亦是系统性种族歧视中的一环，来源于美国历史上长期以来的种族隔离政策。平权行动的诞生就是为了促进解决历史性和持续的种族不平等、教育资源不公平问题。基于几十年的民权和种族正义运动，平权法案涉及的领域不断扩充，涉及的对象延伸到更多的种族、性别、宗教背景和其他的被边缘化社群。大学招生中的平权法案也是努力来的成果之一。

然而，今年7月，美国大学招生中的平权法案（Affirmative Action）遭到推翻。作为在美的留学生和校友，我们深知平权法案本身并不能解决根本性的歧视和不公平，只能在一定程度上对这些糟糕的现实情况进行有限的纠正，但我们坚信它是校园多元性、教育公正的保障之一。平权法案被推翻后，大学招生会更加倾向于白人和富裕家庭。更加激烈的竞争趋势会导致奖学金变少，学费变高，少数族裔、第一代大学生、低收入等背景的群体被录取机会减少，处境会更加艰难。作为少数群体中的一员，国际学生也会面对一个更加单一、排外和更不友好的校园环境。

在观点日益极化，信息壁垒强化的当下，多元的观点会惠及每一个学生。多元化的校园和课堂上多元的学生背景弥足珍贵。多元是建立更加包容、正义的社会所需要的基石，而不应该被当作社会中的威胁。来自黑人、原住民、拉美裔、亚裔美国人等少数群体的学生多年以来在校内外的组织和倡导促成了一系列关注校园多元、包容、公正的政策和项目，例如 Office of Student Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Women's Center, LGBTQTA+ Center等。

我们作为国际学生，也受益于这些强调开放性、包容性更强的入学政策和校园支持政策。但校园系统性的支持还远远不够。不仅如此，随着平权法案被推翻，现有的多元校园项目与政策也正在受到威胁。因此，我们在此呼吁中国留学生，特别是在校大学生，加入到倡导更加全面的支持被边缘化群体的学生的倡导和组织中来。

我们呼吁留学生和海外青年一起来：

- 通过学校公开的信息和询问管理层等方式了解和关注所在学校政策，对学校的招生、多元文化、和国际生待遇政策监督和问责。具体包括但不限于：
 - 是否有公开招生数据？是否设立平权行动专项工作小组？是否有在平权法案被推翻后出台应对政策？
 - 有国际生入学的项目是否有对国际生的学业、身心健康、文化适应等各方面需求的支持？现行的政策和预算有哪些需要改进和加强的？
- 主动和身边同学（尤其是中国留学生）交流教育公正、种族正义和保守势力反扑等议题。认识、联系、和组织其他同样关注相关议题的国际生、学生团体、教职人员、小组等。
- 与周围直接受多元招生政策影响、缺乏系统支持的个体和群体连结，合作。一起采取集体行动，以对学校表达诉求、跟进问责。根据学校现行情况和学生需求决定具体行动方式，例如情况调查、请愿书、集会、集体谈判等。
- 持续跟踪关注学校所在当地和美国全国性的种族政策，社会公平相关立法等。

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Dear Chinese international students and alumni,

As international students, we are not unfamiliar with the lack of support from educational institutions and the difficulty of fitting into the so-called “mainstream” campus life as outsiders. Over the past decade, U.S. universities have expanded their enrollment of international students, with the number of Chinese students increasing from less than 130,000 in the 2009-10 academic year to over 370,000 in the 2019-20 academic year. Most international students are self-funded, becoming a critical source of revenue for American universities and colleges. However, many educational institutions have not adequately invested in support for international students, and the responsibilities of international student offices and/or other equivalent institutions are often limited to handling visa and immigration-related issues. As a result, many international students feel like they are treated as “cash cows”.

This lack of attention from campus administrators and the absence of adequate support systems are not limited to international students. **First-generation college students, students from low-income backgrounds, students with special learning needs, and many marginalized students with diverse needs are all neglected and unsupported in an educational system built on a white and ableist culture.** Chinese international students, along with other Asian students, also face stereotypes and discrimination in their daily lives. Most universities lack ethnic/racial studies programs and in-culture mental/health support programs. Students of color, especially black and indigenous students have long been excluded from educational systems and opportunities. Yet educational injustice is a part of ongoing systemic racial segregation and injustices in this country. The birth of affirmative action was intended to address historical and ongoing racial inequality and unequal access to educational and social resources.

However, in July of this year, SCOTUS overturned affirmative action in college admissions in the United States. **As international students and alumni living in the United States, we are well aware that affirmative action on its own cannot solve the fundamental problems of discrimination and inequality.** It can only provide a limited correction to these troubling realities. **We firmly believe that it is a safeguard for campus diversity and educational equity.** With the overturning of affirmative action, the admissions process at colleges and universities will become more skewed toward white and other applicants from affluent families. The trend toward intensified competition will result in fewer scholarships, higher tuition, and fewer admissions opportunities for minorities, first-generation college students, and students from low-income backgrounds, making their situation even more difficult. As members of minority groups, international students and new immigrants will also face a more homogeneous, exclusionary, and less welcoming campus environment.

In today's world of increasingly polarized viewpoints and heightened information barriers, diverse perspectives benefit every student. Diversity on campus and in the classroom is invaluable. Diversity is the cornerstone of building a more inclusive and equitable society and should not be viewed as a threat to society. Students of color, particularly Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander students, have advocated for years for policies and programs that focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity on campus, such as the Office of Student Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, the Women's Center, the AAPI Center, and the LGBTQTA+ Center.

As international students and new immigrants, we have also benefited from these more open and inclusive admissions and campus support policies. However, systemic support on campus is still far from adequate. Moreover, with the overturning of affirmative action, existing diversity programs and policies are also under threat. Therefore, **we call on Chinese international students, especially those currently enrolled in educational institutions, to join advocacy groups and organizations that support marginalized student groups more broadly.**

We call on international students and alumni to:

- **Investigate and monitor** school policies related to admissions, diversity, and treatment of international students through publicly available information and inquiries to school administration. Specific issues to consider include, but are not limited to
 - Is college admissions data publicly available?
 - Is there a dedicated affirmative action working group?
 - Are there policies in place to address the overturn of affirmative action?
 - Do programs for international student enrollment provide adequate support for academic, physical, and mental health, and cultural adjustment needs?
 - What policies and budgets need to be improved and strengthened?
- **Actively engage** in discussions with fellow students, especially Chinese international students, on issues such as educational equity, racial justice, and conservative backlash. **Connect and organize** with other international students, student groups, faculty, staff, and organizations that share similar concerns.
- **Connect and collaborate** with individuals and groups directly affected by diversity admissions policies and the lack of systematic support in your community. **Take collective action** to voice your concerns to the school and hold it accountable. Come up with specific methods of action based on the current situation and student needs, such as surveys, petitions, rallies, collective bargaining, etc.
- **Continually monitor** local and state race policies, social justice legislation, and related developments in the United States.