

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4595

To temporarily extend the period of validity of J–1 visas issued to employees and contractors of the United States Agency for Global Media and its broadcasting networks.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Mr. MERKLEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To temporarily extend the period of validity of J–1 visas issued to employees and contractors of the United States Agency for Global Media and its broadcasting networks.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF J–1 VISAS FOR U.S.**

4 **AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA EMPLOYEES**

5 **AND CONTRACTORS.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection

7 (b) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, any

8 nonimmigrant visa issued to an alien described in section

9 101(a)(15)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8

1 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(J)) (commonly known as a “J–1  
2 visa”) that expired during the 2-month period immediately  
3 preceding the date of the enactment of this Act, or is  
4 scheduled to expire during the 90-day period beginning on  
5 such date of enactment shall automatically be extended  
6 until the date that is 90 days after such date of enactment  
7 if the alien to whom such visa was issued has a valid con-  
8 tract or employment agreement with the United States  
9 Agency for Global Media or any of its broadcasting net-  
10 works that, absent such visa expiration, would remain in  
11 effect during such extension period.

12 (b) EXEMPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),  
13 the Secretary of Homeland Security may deny the exten-  
14 sion of a J–1 visa under such subsection, on a case-by-  
15 case basis, if the Secretary—

16 (1) determines that the alien to whom such visa  
17 was issued would pose a risk to the national security  
18 of the United States if such visa were to be ex-  
19 tended; and

20 (2) provides a briefing to the Committee on  
21 Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Committee on  
22 the Judiciary of the Senate, the Committee on For-  
23 eign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and  
24 the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of

1 Representatives to explain the reasons for any such  
2 determination.

3 (c) CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.—Not later than 30  
4 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chief  
5 Executive Officer of the United States Agency for Global  
6 Media, accompanied by other appropriate senior leaders,  
7 shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Foreign Rela-  
8 tions of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
9 of the House of Representatives that—

10 (1) provides a case-by-case assessment of how  
11 the United States Agency for Global Media and its  
12 broadcasting networks have facilitated the employ-  
13 ment of foreign journalists with J–1 visas, including  
14 future plans to retain such journalists;

15 (2) describes any threats to national security  
16 that any of these journalists may pose; and

17 (3) identifies any circumstances involving the  
18 misuse of hiring authority with respect to such jour-  
19 nalists.

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