



Press Release – For Immediate Release – June 18, 2014

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**Conference of Mayors Passes Resolution Opposing
Inclusion of Summer Work Travel Program in Immigration Reform**

The Cape May County Conference of Mayors unanimously passed a resolution that opposed the inclusion of the summer work travel program in national immigration reform legislation.

The resolution states the county Conference of Mayors supports the continuation and protection of the U.S. State Department’s manager J-1 visa summer work travel program.

The program allows international workers, or J-1 students, to come to the United States to work and travel for a period up to four months during their summer break and then return to school in their home country.

Lower Township Mayor Michael Beck, who is president of the county Conference of Mayors, said the program is important for cultural diversity and integral to the success of the county’s seasonal tourism industry.

Last year, the Senate passed the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, which focused on sweeping immigration reform. Another bill, which was introduced in the House last month, is called The Fraudulent Overseas Recruitment and Trafficking Elimination, or FORTE, act, would make it illegal for sponsors to charge international student workers fees to participate in the program.

The county Conference of Mayors said that both pieces of federal legislation are a major cause of concern and could seriously affect business in the county.

Beck said that the work travel program provides a valuable asset to the local economy by enabling many seasonal businesses to remain open even when the local workforce isn’t available.

The resolution states that “although supplemental to our local workforce, if the summer work travel program were to be eliminated, Cape May County would experience huge economic losses due to our insufficient number of available workers between March and October.”

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