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[00:00:13] **Speaker 1** One day they're going to class, the next they're being told to leave the country immediately. More than 50 international university students in Wisconsin have had their student visas revoked this week, half of them at UW Madison but also at system campuses across the state at Concordia University and Marquette, according to university officials. UW Madison says it played no role in the visa terminations and know of no ICE activity on campus. Further, university officials say they don't believe that revoked visas relate to political activity. So what is going on? We turn to Madison Immigration Attorney Amanda Generman with the Pinesbach Firm. And thanks very much for being here.

[00:00:57] **Speaker 2** You're very welcome, thank you for asking me to be.

[00:00:58] **Speaker 1** So I understand you've been contacted by some of these people but as to that question, what is going on, do you know?

[00:01:08] **Speaker 2** That's a great question. These are one of these things that we have been experiencing in the last 90 days that every day feels like a new day, right? There are constant changes happening and this being the latest of that experience for foreign nationals in our communities.

[00:01:25] **Speaker 1** Is that how it works, that they get notice of termination by the U.S. government and then they have to leave the country immediately?

[00:01:33] **Speaker 2** So student visas are its own unique world, and there are systems in place that notify a student if they seem to not hold that status anymore. And usually it's through the university, DSO, Designated Student Officer, who notifies the student or has a conversation and says, there's an issue here. This is not how this unfolded for these 40 to 50 students. It was an email in their box. with this notification, no real explanation. So, yes and no to that answer.

[00:02:08] **Speaker 1** What happens if the students do not, in fact, leave immediately? Do they run the risk of being picked up by ICE?

[00:02:16] **Speaker 2** I think that this is definitely an act of enforcement, and should people not remove themselves or seek other relief to remain in the United States or try to establish that status back in place, that ICE could take that action, come to take them and start the removal proceedings.

[00:02:38] **Speaker 1** How urgently are advocates like yourself kind of responding to this? I understand that there's kind of a rapid response to this. Is that to try to set up some kind of class action lawsuit or what are lawyers doing?

[00:02:51] **Speaker 2** At this point, there's definitely, I mean, it's a national issue that we are experiencing. So immigration being a national bar, we are watching individuals from New Hampshire, things that are getting a lot of play in the media as to the litigation that is happening under these circumstances. So here locally within the Madison and state of Wisconsin, a group of attorneys as of this week were talking about how do we respond? What are the things we can do? Who do we know at the university? How do we get resources out? So yes, it's a small but mighty group, but we are here to assist students.

[00:03:30] **Speaker 1** has any information been forthcoming from the university or from federal immigration officials?

[00:03:37] **Speaker 2** The answer is no. Nobody is really providing the information, and that's what the problem is. There's supposed to be a system here. There's suppose to be a due process opportunity for students to explore what are the issues. But it's being very, very, it's very vague.

[00:03:57] **Speaker 1** How broad are the reasons that result in termination of a student visa and removal from the U.S.?

[00:04:03] **Speaker 2** Two different answers to that question. Terminating a status for a student is under a system that we call SEVIS. And there's a check-down box. And there are three to four if you fail to maintain your full caseload. If you do have contact with law enforcement, it could be looked at. So it's primarily due to participating in school, which is what you are here to do on an F visa. And so, when... these things happen, what these students seem to be noticing in their boxes of why they're being terminated is that it's for unknown, for other failing to maintain status.

[00:04:46] **Speaker 1** but they don't know. And the university says that it does not appear that these terminations have anything to do with political activity.

[00:04:54] **Speaker 2** from what we're seeing right now. And again, there are very, I have not had access to a majority of these individuals. That does not seem to be the box that is ticked.

[00:05:05] **Speaker 1** So are these students who are terminated, their status terminated and their visas revoked presumably as a result of that, are they able to have hearings?

[00:05:18] **Speaker 2** That is what we're seeing this litigation action, trying to get these students back to having those conversations, to say, why was this terminated? What is the grounds for that and was it valid?

[00:05:35] **Speaker 1** From your interactions with these students and other lawyers that you're talking with, are they looking over their shoulder, are in hiding, what are they doing?

[00:05:46] **Speaker 2** I think our communities are in crisis right now. I think that people are very afraid. When we're watching people in Boston being taken off the street and half-masked officers, I don't know how you don't look over your shoulder and how you worry about what's coming next or am I supposed to be here, am I not. So I do believe that the community is very much afraid for all of those reasons, rightfully so.

[00:06:13] **Speaker 1** All right, Amanda Gannerman, we leave it there. Thanks very much. It really is. It's cowboy. Yeah. And to me, it's really shocking that you get this email that says other reasons. Well, what other reasons? And who's saying that? And who is deciding?

[00:06:39] **Speaker 2** Like I said, generally the process is through the DSOs. Like they have to check these regulatory statuses maybe every semester, right? Are the students keeping up? Are they working? Are they not supposed to be working? All the things that are permitted. And so those are the things that generally get ticked. And then there's opportunities to reinstate or if you're having a hard time, you're stressed out, you need a break from school, you work with your DSO and that's the relationship. But what's happening is ICE, who maintains... that SEVIS program is skipping it all, and going, uh-uh, you know, we're not going to use the university, we are not going tell the university we're just going to go through and enter our own.

[00:07:20] **Speaker 1** Do you have any idea, someone asked me this and I said I have no idea, but the nationality

[00:07:27] **Speaker 2** people? Yeah, from what I know from the UW system, at least from Madison, it seems to be Asian. Seems to be mostly Chinese and Korean nationals. who I anticipate.

[00:07:41] **Speaker 1** Right. On the other hand, UW-Madison in particular has really recruited from China for their international

[00:07:52] **Speaker 2** student base. So I think it's I had a conversation with a colleague in LA last night is that like some of these actions and who they're selecting seems to be kind of testing the waters. Like I think we all expect it's going to be the encampment kids. Yeah. And and the individuals who are using their voices. Yeah, to be heard and and less about the students who seem to be minding their own business. Yeah So it's like, if you allow that, where to, you know, again, I think there's a lot of just pure lawlessness going on and going, what can we get away with?

[00:08:32] **Speaker 1** Would you be willing to kind of keep us up to date as to what you learn and what you know?

[00:08:39] **Speaker 2** I would happily do that. And like I said, there's four groups here in Madison that are saying we're interested in doing some of the litigation work. So myself and other people you've spoken with, Luca Weiss-Odison at DeWitt is really, when I think about F1s, that's what I said to Steve. I'm like, she's your girl. Like, if you want to talk F1, that's who you should be talking to. Freya Katkowski with East Bridge Law Group. They have a three team of immigration lawyers. Pinsbach, we have litigation attorneys, right? So I'm corralling with people who do more litigation work. Where my practice area, I do a lot of humanitarian, I'm much like Erin in that way. I do lot of U visas, violence against women act, self petitions, naturalizing. I just went through with a client today, the whole application process is being taken at just such a deeper dive right now. I'm walking through these clients, these conversations about terrorist organizations. material support, people who are from Cambodia, like it is, everything is under the level of scrutiny that I have never felt, and I've been doing this for 23 years.

[00:09:51] **Speaker 1** Question about someone who is here on a green card. Would, in your opinion, they be safe to leave the country and come back in?

[00:10:00] **Speaker 2** I have a flyer on what it means to travel as an LPR, as a green card holder. I mean, we see U.S. citizens are now, their devices are being taken. I don't not encourage my clients to travel right now. I'm like, unless this is an absolute emergency, and then these are the things you're gonna do with your devices, here's the ACLU's number, here are the resources. I think everybody is subject to being investigated.

[00:10:25] **Speaker 1** Have you heard of people leaving the country, green card holders leaving the country and not being allowed back in?

[00:10:32] **Speaker 2** Definitely deferred inspection, secondary inspection are happening with residents who are returning. What we are hearing as well is that CBP is trying to push this form, it's called a 407, to basically abandon your residency. So saying why don't you just sign this? Oh my gosh. We'll take your green card, you can go home. Wow. So the level of kind of, we talk about what airports do you come to or airports don't come to. I don't feel like any airport is a great place right now, but I know where I'm not sending my clients. Houston, Atlanta, Logan. Boston is awful. So we try to go smaller. I worked with a large group of Palestinian students who were able to get out of RAFA and get student visas, because no universities are there, obviously, anymore. And we assisted 19 students to come on scholarship, because other universities here are stepping up, going, we will get your education completed. And we flew those students in through a small international Airport in Ohio. and the CBP officer called one of our main contacts, and he's like, what's going on here? Like 19 students are sitting in my waiting room, you know, and Ban walked the officer right through it, and only one had like one kind of holdup, but all of those students are studying, and now I wonder. Right. Now what? Right, exactly, wow. So there's a lot of really, you now, like again, national action and activities. people finding the spaces that we can really advocate for people on different levels. It's pretty scary. You're so welcome. Again, it's one of those things I just want to sometimes just go home and lay down and take a break. So thank you for highlighting it. Thank you for supporting these students and having their stories told. And maybe some of them will come and want to talk.

[00:12:41] **Speaker 1** If you learn of one, please let us know because we would love to do that but we don't want to kind of push people either.

[00:12:52] **Speaker 2** The risk is great, understandably. Families are concerned. You're sending your loved ones here, thinking this is a safe space, and now we're helping people get to Canada.

[00:13:05] **Speaker 1** Are you, are you actually doing?

[00:13:06] **Speaker 2** I haven't, but I know some colleagues that are working on those issues. We'd like to follow one of those people. I do know as well. I mean, the woman who is representing the student from Tufts is a good colleague of mine from Boston. What's the status with that now? I think she's still detained. And I think that both her and Mahmoud Khalil are still in Louisiana, even though the judges are saying their cases can be heard back in their jurisdictions of Boston and the Northeast. they haven't been physically released to those spaces. I think I'm still connected, so. You are.