



Visas for 1st Amendment Foes?

July 24, 2026

Last December, the U.S. State Department imposed visa bans on five persons who, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said, “have led organized efforts to coerce American platforms to censor, demonetize, and suppress American viewpoints they oppose.”

But is it okay for the U.S. government to withhold visas from foreigners acting to undermine the freedom of speech of Americans?

Not okay! [says](#) a judge trying to put a halt to the administration’s withholding of visas from foreign officials and others who push for such censorship.

Why? Because noncitizens “could reasonably understand the policy to place their immigration

status at risk — not because they wield foreign sovereign power or facilitate its censorship, but simply because they work in content moderation.”

The don’t-attack-freedom-of-speech requirement is said to unlawfully burden noncitizen speech.

Of course, to withhold or revoke a visa does not stop anyone’s speech. The persons thus deprived are at liberty to keep demanding the curtailing of online U.S. speech. They’re not being tossed in the hoosegow.

The judge’s stance could be used to waylay any attempt to counteract specific coercive actions by noncitizens to undermine U.S. freedoms, whether originating from Brussels or [Beijing](#). All such attacks manifest the actors’ often-articulated viewpoints.

Indeed, some persons contend that ejecting formerly visa-equipped foreign students from the U.S. for [terrorizing Jewish students](#) and vandalizing campuses are suffering from violations of freedom of speech. This is incorrect. No foreign-based soldiers in a war against U.S. freedoms possess an inalienable right to condition-free visas.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.