

DEBBIE DINGELL  
6TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

102 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4071

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
HEALTH  
COMMERCE, MANUFACTURING, AND TRADE  
COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

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WATER, WILDLIFE, AND FISHERIES  
ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

DISTRICT OFFICES:

2006 HOGBACK ROAD  
SUITE 7  
ANN ARBOR, MI 48105  
(734) 481-1100

WOODHAVEN CITY HALL  
21869 WEST ROAD  
WOODHAVEN, MI 48183  
(313) 278-2936

WEBSITE: [DEBBIEDINGELL.HOUSE.GOV](http://DEBBIEDINGELL.HOUSE.GOV)

December 17, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary  
U.S Department of State  
2201 C St NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio,

I am writing regarding the Trump Administration's recent announcement of expanded screening and vetting for H-1B and dependent H-4 visa applicants.

On December 3, 2025, the State Department announced it would expand the requirement that an online presence review be conducted for all H-1B applicants and their dependents, in addition to the students and exchange visitors already subject to this review. This change in policy comes as many families are traveling abroad for the holidays and have had visa appointments booked months ahead of time to align with their travel.

There is a serious issue arising throughout the country including many families in my District whose visa appointments have been delayed multiple months and who are now stuck in limbo, unable to return home. In one case, the visa appointment was rescheduled less than 48 hours before the appointment was supposed to take place. Their new appointment was scheduled for three months after the original appointment, with no consultation with the family. They had already traveled to reach their appointment and without the new visas they cannot get back to their lives in the United States. One of their children, who is an American citizen, will miss months of school if the family cannot move up their visa appointment. They are trapped abroad with no recourse. It is unacceptable their lives and many others are being upended by this sudden new review requirement.


Our children should not be the ones paying for these policy changes with their education. These families deserve clear answers from the State Department regarding the delays the new policy has created and an understanding of how and when they can return to their lives. They have jobs, homes, and friends that are expecting their timely return. The lack of clarity regarding how families in these situations can proceed is concerning.

In light of these facts, I respectfully ask the Department to provide a detailed explanation of how the Department plans to address circumstances like that of the family in my District, to ensure they can return home in a timely manner. I also ask to be informed of the timeline for the new visa review process, including how long it is expected to take with the new online presence review, and what safeguards are being considered to prevent families from being left in limbo as they try to get back home to the United States.

I would appreciate any clarification regarding the policy's impact on visa appointment scheduling and a reassessment of its impact on vulnerable individuals and families stranded abroad. I ask that you please respond within two weeks of receiving this letter.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your full and prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debbie Dingell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress