

Madison, WI, January 5, 2007

Dear Senator Feingold,

Given the difficulty reaching you directly, I hope you are not offended by me using your local address. I know you are a highly respected statesman still very connected to your home state, and hope you understand my urge to try reaching you directly in a matter you may or me not be aware of through your Middleton office.

I am writing you in my "function" of being the divorced father of a Middleton toddler girl. While I have accepted employment back in my native home Germany and prepare the task of returning overseas with little funds and little hope of making it back here, I feel it my duty to try help bring about a change in legal immigration policies. While I was born in East Germany, I came to the US in 1998 to earn a Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee. After that, for 4 years I was going from one postdoctoral appointment to the next at UW-Madison. As a foreign postdoc, such does not allow applying for research grants, nor do too many short-term appointments give a good record in science. I managed to achieve some publications, one even in the magazine "*Science*". The general downturn in funding basic science affected my postdoctoral advisors.

I had married another German national who works in a Madison biotech company and now gains her Green Card through this employment. Ultimately, my marriage also fell apart, partly due to my job insecurities. Neither marriage nor divorce was registered in Germany. In 2005 my former spouse gave birth to our daughter. She is a US citizen, and 20 months old. Through costly divorce battles, I gained some of the initially denied custody, which is all I gained. However, as my H1B runs out, and as the funding situation never seems to improve, I had to accept a job in Germany, rather than risking ever getting retirement and welfare benefits when I am old. The alternative now would be to make myself deportable, and/or return to Germany to be homeless there. I don't want to be a run-away dad.

Given that Immigration Reform regarding undocumented aliens might again be discussed, I ask you to take the plight of legal workers and immigrants into account. I know from the [immigrationvoice.org](http://immigrationvoice.org) website that millions of people far ahead of me with pending Green Cards also have tremendous obstacles. The general trend of rising divorces in all western societies must affect people in H1B/H4, and similar categories, or waiting for Green Card, as well. There simply will be many cases of children suffering the consequences. I ask you to consider amending immigration requirements for skilled, US-trained people with children in this country. Even though the US appeared to have failed to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Children, the US should adhere to a higher standard and not cause divorced parents to be ever separated from their children. It could allow long-term legal workers with "legacy children" more flexible work visas, without giving Green Cards.

I personally see little hope of returning here unless such changes are made, or my next German employment and improvement in scientific funding allow me to consider a tenure track job in the US.

Thank you very much for taking your scarce time to read my letter. I also thank you for your positions in the Senate, if I am allowed to say such as a foreign national.

Sincerely  
Dr. Dirk Krueger