

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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July 10, 2019

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is pleased that the U.S. House of Representatives is considering H.R. 1044, the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2019, which would eliminate the per-country quotas for employment-based immigrants. We look forward to the House passing this legislation. We hope that some inadequacies of this legislation are addressed as the legislative process continues.

H.R. 1044 would eliminate the per-country quotas that impact all employment-based immigrant visa petitions. Currently, these quotas limit nationals from every country in the world to receive no more than 7% of the total amount of employment-based green cards issued annually. In short, the quota for Iceland, which has a population of approximately 338,000 people, is the same as India, with a population of roughly 1.338 billion people.

These quotas cause a significant amount of uncertainty for employers that hire highly-skilled, highly-educated immigrant workers that were born in India and China. Oftentimes, workers from these two countries wait for years, and in many cases, decades, to receive their green cards. During that period of time, these arbitrary caps on visa issuance hamstringing the ability of employers to promote their immigrant workers to new roles within their companies. This policy is neither fair nor wise; eliminating these caps would provide much needed relief for companies and their workers.

This bill is not perfect. It does not address many other employment-based immigration reforms that the business community believe are important for Congress to address. However, the approach in H.R. 1044 is much better than the legislation in the Senate, S. 386, that was being discussed last month. The Senate bill would establish several new H-1B compliance provisions that are problematic, especially for small businesses.

In addition, the EB-5 transition provisions in H.R. 1044 are preferable to those in S. 386, but would benefit from further refinement. Finally, the Chamber hopes to work with Congress to ensure elimination of the per-country caps does not have an unnecessarily adverse impact on the ability of healthcare providers to meet their staffing needs.

Although the Chamber recommends additional changes to the bill, we believe today's consideration is a necessary step forward to a final product the Chamber can endorse. We look forward to continuing to work with all Members in the House and Senate to get a bill signed into law that eliminates per country caps.

Sincerely,



Neil Bradley