

*EWIC Statement
June 17, 2013*

EWIC Urges the Senate to Move Deliberately through the Debate of the Senate Bi-Partisan Bill on Comprehensive Immigration Reform

The Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC) is encouraged that the Senate is moving forward on debate of the comprehensive immigration reform bill. We believe that S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, addresses many of the major elements needed by the business community. It includes a template for a new lesser-skilled temporary worker program for the economy to get the workers needed from abroad when US workers are unavailable; a mechanism for the undocumented to earn legal status after being screened and paying a penalty; other legal immigration reforms for employment based immigrants; and, there is an employment verification system in this legislation that is a starting point for discussions on further improvements in this aspect of comprehensive reform.

As the Senate considers ways in which to improve this measure, we do hope to see modifications of the legislation that include:

- Modifications to the safe harbors and penalty provisions of Title III
- Modifications to employer liability provisions of Title III
- Modification to ensure that employers of all sizes can use the employment eligibility verification system efficiently and without burden – financial or otherwise.

We do ultimately hope to see changes to new the lesser skilled visa program, including additional visas that reflect the economic needs of U.S. job creators and removal of the construction industry disparate treatment found in the Senate bill. We look forward to continuing to work with lawmakers towards passage of comprehensive immigration reform legislation that meets the needs of industries that rely on essential workers.

EWIC is a broad-based coalition of national businesses and trade associations from across the industry spectrum concerned with both semi-skilled and unskilled ("essential worker") labor. EWIC supports policies that facilitate the employment of essential workers by U.S. companies that are unable to find American workers.