

*EWIC Statement  
October 23, 2013*

## **EWIC Encourages the House to Move Deliberately through the Regular Process on the Many Immigration Bills it is Considering**

Now that Congress can refocus after the showdown over the budget and debt ceiling, we are hearing calls from both sides of the aisle to go back to immigration reform. The Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC) is looking forward to continuing to work with the House of Representatives as it deliberates the important issue of immigration reform.

There is currently **no effective** process by which lesser skilled essential workers can immigrate legally other than a guest worker in a seasonal or temporary period position. Our American-born workforce will increase only 1% over the next 10 years. The restaurant industry alone projects a need for 15% more workers. There are simply not enough American-born workers to fill the jobs we expect to be created by a vibrant economy in the coming years.

EWIC believes that any reformed immigration policy must include:

- a new essential temporary worker program to identify qualified immigrant workers when domestic labor is unavailable;
- a workable and fair employment verification system;
- legal immigration reforms for employment-based immigrants to deal with unrealistic quotas and processes; and
- a mechanism for unauthorized immigrants to earn legal status under strict conditions and after complying with strict criteria.

To date, the House has five immigration bills considered by of the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees:

1. *The Border Security Results Act* (H.R. 1417) was introduced on April 9, 2013 by House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Michael McCaul and approved by the Committee on May 15, 2013.
2. *The Strengthen and Fortify Enforcement Act* (H.R. 2278), also known as The SAFE Act, was introduced by Rep. Trey Gowdy and approved by the House Judiciary Committee on June 18, 2013.
3. *The Legal Workforce Act* (H.R. 1772) was introduced on April 26, 2013 by Rep. Lamar Smith and approved by the House Judiciary Committee on June 26, 2013.
4. *The Supplying Knowledge Based Immigrants and Lifting Levels of STEM Visas Act* (H.R. 2131), also known as The SKILLS Visa Act, was introduced by Rep. Darrell Issa on May 23, 2013. The SKILLS Visa Act was approved by the House Judiciary Committee on June 27, 2013.

5. On April 26, 2013, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte introduced the *Agricultural Guestworker Act* (H.R. 1773), also known as the AG Act. The Committee approved this bill on June 19, 2013.

Although we recognize that these bills may be modified when they get to the floor, it is still significant to have so many bills in process. We are particularly encouraged to hear that a new lesser-skilled temporary worker program is being drafted by Members that will allow the economy to get the workers needed from abroad when domestic labor is unavailable. We understand that this new temporary worker program will include visa numbers that reflect the economic needs of U.S. job creators and will be open to all industries. We encourage all House Members to support this policy initiative.

*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.*

#### EWIC Members

American Health Care Association  
American Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
American Meat Institute  
American Nursery & Landscape Association  
American Staffing Association  
Associated Builders and Contractors  
Associated General Contractors of America  
Federation of Employers & Workers of America  
Greenberg Traurig, LLP  
ImmigrationWorks USA  
Independent Electrical Contractors  
International Franchise Association  
National Apartment Association  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Club Association  
National Council of Chain Restaurants  
National Multi Housing Council  
National Retail Federation  
National Roofing Contractors Association  
Professional Landcare Network  
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council  
Small Business Workforce Alliance