

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 281

To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 2, 2017

Mr. LEE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fairness for High-
5 Skilled Immigrants Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. NUMERICAL LIMITATION TO ANY SINGLE FOREIGN**
 2 **STATE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(a)(2) of the Immi-
 4 gration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(2)) is
 5 amended to read as follows:

6 “(2) PER COUNTRY LEVELS FOR FAMILY-SPON-
 7 SORED IMMIGRANTS.—Subject to paragraphs (3)
 8 and (4), the total number of immigrant visas made
 9 available to natives of any single foreign state or de-
 10 pendent area under section 203(a) in any fiscal year
 11 may not exceed 15 percent (in the case of a single
 12 foreign state) or 2 percent (in the case of a depend-
 13 ent area) of the total number of such visas made
 14 available under such section in that fiscal year.”.

15 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 202 of
 16 such Act (8 U.S.C. 1152) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a)—

18 (A) in paragraph (3), by striking “both
 19 subsections (a) and (b) of section 203” and in-
 20 serting “section 203(a)”; and

21 (B) by striking paragraph (5); and

22 (2) by amending subsection (e) to read as fol-
 23 lows:

24 “(e) SPECIAL RULES FOR COUNTRIES AT CEILING.—
 25 If the total number of immigrant visas made available
 26 under section 203(a) to natives of any single foreign state

1 or dependent area will exceed the numerical limitation
2 specified in subsection (a)(2) in any fiscal year, immigrant
3 visas shall be allotted to such natives under section 203(a)
4 (to the extent practicable and otherwise consistent with
5 this section and section 203) in a manner so that, except
6 as provided in subsection (a)(4), the proportion of the
7 visas made available under each of paragraphs (1) through
8 (4) of section 203(a) is equal to the ratio of the total visas
9 made available under the respective paragraph to the total
10 visas made available under section 203(a).”.

11 (c) COUNTRY-SPECIFIC OFFSET.—Section 2 of the
12 Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992 (8 U.S.C. 1255
13 note) is amended—

14 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “(as defined
15 in subsection (e))”;

16 (2) by striking subsection (d); and

17 (3) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
18 section (d).

19 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
20 this section shall take effect as if enacted on September
21 30, 2016, and shall apply to fiscal year 2017 and each
22 subsequent fiscal year.

23 (e) TRANSITION RULES FOR EMPLOYMENT-BASED
24 IMMIGRANTS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2)
2 through (4), and notwithstanding title II of the Im-
3 migration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151 et
4 seq.), the following rules shall apply:

5 (A) For fiscal year 2017, 15 percent of the
6 immigrant visas made available under each of
7 paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 203(b) of
8 such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) shall be allotted to
9 immigrants who are natives of a foreign state
10 or dependent area that was not one of the two
11 states with the largest aggregate numbers of
12 natives obtaining immigrant visas during fiscal
13 year 2011 under such paragraphs.

14 (B) For fiscal year 2018, 10 percent of the
15 immigrant visas made available under each of
16 such paragraphs shall be allotted to immigrants
17 who are natives of a foreign state or dependent
18 area that was not one of the two states with the
19 largest aggregate numbers of natives obtaining
20 immigrant visas during fiscal year 2012 under
21 such paragraphs.

22 (C) For fiscal year 2019, 10 percent of the
23 immigrant visas made available under each of
24 such paragraphs shall be allotted to immigrants
25 who are natives of a foreign state or dependent

1 area that was not one of the two states with the
2 largest aggregate numbers of natives obtaining
3 immigrant visas during fiscal year 2015 under
4 such paragraphs.

5 (2) PER-COUNTRY LEVELS.—

6 (A) RESERVED VISAS.—The number of
7 visas reserved under each of subparagraphs (A)
8 through (C) of paragraph (1) made available to
9 natives of any single foreign state or dependent
10 area in the appropriate fiscal year may not ex-
11 ceed 25 percent (in the case of a single foreign
12 state) or 2 percent (in the case of a dependent
13 area) of the total number of such visas.

14 (B) UNRESERVED VISAS.—Not more than
15 85 percent of the immigrant visas made avail-
16 able under each of paragraphs (2) and (3) of
17 section 203(b) of the Immigration and Nation-
18 ality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) and not reserved
19 under paragraph (1), for each of the fiscal
20 years 2015, 2016, and 2017, may be allotted to
21 immigrants who are natives of any single for-
22 eign state.

23 (3) SPECIAL RULE TO PREVENT UNUSED
24 VISAS.—If, with respect to fiscal year 2015, 2016, or
25 2017, the application of paragraphs (1) and (2)

1 would prevent the total number of immigrant visas
2 made available under paragraph (2) or (3) of section
3 203(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
4 U.S.C. 1153(b)) from being issued, such visas may
5 be issued during the remainder of such fiscal year
6 without regard to paragraphs (1) and (2).

7 (4) RULES FOR CHARGEABILITY.—Section
8 202(b) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(b)) shall apply
9 in determining the foreign state to which an alien is
10 chargeable for purposes of this subsection.

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