

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 9, 2020.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 9, 2020, at 10:20 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1757.
That the Senate passed S. 2321.
That the Senate passed S. 2683.
That the Senate passed S. 3414.
That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4803.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1601

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 4 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

ADDING IRELAND TO E-3
NONIMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2877) to add Ireland to the E-3 nonimmigrant visa program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2877

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. E-3 VISAS FOR IRISH NATIONALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101(a)(15)(E)(iii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(E)(iii)) is amended by inserting “or, on a basis of reciprocity as determined by the Secretary of State, a national of Ireland,” after “Australia”.

(b) EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS.—Section 212 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182) is amended—

(1) by redesignating the second subsection (t) (as added by section 1(b)(2)(B) of Public Law 108-449 (118 Stat. 3470)) as subsection (u); and

(2) by adding at the end of subsection (t)(1) (as added by section 402(b)(2) of Public Law 108-77 (117 Stat. 941)) the following:

“(E) In the case of an attestation filed with respect to a national of Ireland described in section 101(a)(15)(E)(iii), the employer is, and will remain during the period of authorized employment of such Irish national, a participant in good standing in the E-Verify program described in section 403(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note).”.

(c) APPLICATION ALLOCATION.—Paragraph (11) of section 214(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(g)(11)) is amended to read as follows:

“(11)(A) The Secretary of State may approve initial applications submitted for aliens described in section 101(a)(15)(E)(iii) only as follows:

“(i) For applicants who are nationals of the Commonwealth of Australia, not more than 10,500 for a fiscal year.

“(ii) For applicants who are nationals of Ireland, not more than a number equal to the difference between 10,500 and the number of applications approved in the prior fiscal year for aliens who are nationals of the Commonwealth of Australia.

“(B) The approval of an application described under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall be deemed for numerical control purposes to have occurred on September 30 of the prior fiscal year.

“(C) The numerical limitation under subparagraph (A) shall only apply to principal aliens and not to the spouses or children of such aliens.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON) and the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. ARMSTRONG) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2877, a bill to add Ireland to the E-3 nonimmigrant visa program.

In 2005, soon after the United States and Australia finalized the Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, Congress created the E-3 visa program. That program provides up to 10,500 temporary visas for Australian nationals who are pre-approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to work in a specialty occupation for a sponsoring United States employer.

A specialty occupation is one that requires the theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge in fields such as science, engineering, and research and development in emerging technologies.

Since the program's inception, Australia has only ever used a fraction of the 10,500 E-3 visas that are available each year. For example, in fiscal year 2019, only 5,800 E-3 visas were issued to Australian nationals.

H.R. 2877 does not increase the number of visas that may be issued, but instead allows Irish nationals to use any unused visas. That bill would take the number of E-3 visas that are left unused by Australia in a given fiscal year and make that same number of visas available to Irish nationals the following fiscal year.

This is a commonsense bill that recognizes the important bond we share with two of our country's closest and most steadfast allies. This bill is not controversial, and, in fact, passed the House by voice vote in 2018 when my Republican colleagues held the majority in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend, Mr. NEAL, chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, for continuing to champion this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2877, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2877, a bill to add Ireland to the E-3 nonimmigrant visa program.

As we approach St. Patrick's Day, this bill recognizes the unique friendship and working relationship between the United States and Ireland.

H.R. 2877 allows nationals of Ireland to be eligible to apply for unused E-3 nonimmigrant visas subject to Ireland providing reciprocal access to U.S. nationals. Holders of the E-3 temporary work visa must be working in a specialty occupation while in the United States.

A specialty occupation is one that is defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act as requiring:

One, “theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge; and

Two, “attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty, or its equivalent, as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.”

The E-3 applicant must have a job offer from an employer in the United States, and that employer must get a foreign labor certification from the U.S. Department of Labor prior to filing a petition with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

H.R. 2877 also requires that employers using Irish E-3 visa holders in their workforce are, and will remain, participants in good standing in the E-Verify program. This means that such employers must use E-Verify to ensure those that they employ are eligible to work in the United States.

E-3 nonimmigrant visas are currently only available to nationals of Australia and are capped at 10,500 per year.