

**Hearing on  
Why They Don't Just Get in Line? Barriers to Legal Immigration  
April 28, 2021**

**House Committee on the Judiciary  
Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship  
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Statement of  
Worldwide ERC®**

Chairwoman Lofgren, Ranking Member McClintock and distinguished members of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, on behalf of the members of the Worldwide Employee Relocation Council (Worldwide ERC®), thank you for the opportunity to submit a written statement on barriers to legal immigration.

Worldwide ERC® represents the people and businesses that facilitate the relocation and movement of global talent. Our over 5,400 professionals represent both corporations and service providers across Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Approximately 80 percent of our members are small- to medium-size businesses, and our members come from a diverse range of professions and industries, including human resources, recruiting, military, real estate, financial services, moving, counseling, and consulting. We are where work is going, and we advocate for public policies that [support work anywhere, are agile and are attentive](#) to employers and employees.

Immigration policies have always played a critical role in workforce mobility as the relocation of talent is a tool employers often deploy to fill critical skills gaps, as a complement to their American workforce. Research overwhelmingly shows that foreign-born talent makes significant contributions to U.S. economic growth and job creation. In fact, economists at Oxford University and Citi found that without immigrants contributing to the quantity and quality of the labor supply, the majority of the economic growth gains America saw between 2011 and 2016 following the recession would have been eliminated.<sup>1</sup> Further, in a recent Gallup survey, nearly 8 in 10 Americans said immigrants are good for the country – the highest level of support since Gallup began asking the question more than 50 years ago.<sup>2</sup>

The United States needs an immigration system that recognizes the value of immigrants and nonimmigrants, that is built for the modern, post-pandemic world. It must balance the needs of national security and U.S. economic growth; treat people fairly; support productivity; protect workers; encourage innovation; and be predictable and reliable to prevent abuse of the system. We have three key recommendations on actions that the Congress and Administration should take to achieve this balance and allow U.S. employers to maintain global competitiveness with a workforce comprised of domestic and international talent.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Goldin, Andrew Pitt, Benjamin Nabarro and Kathleen Boyle, “[Migration and the Economy](#),” *Citi and Oxford Martin School, Oxford University*, September 2018, as cited in Stuart Anderson, “[Immigrants and America’s Comeback from the COVID-19 Crisis](#),” *National Foundation for American Policy*, July 2020.

<sup>2</sup> “[Americans Want More, Not Less, Immigration for First Time](#),” *Gallup*, July 2020.

**Modernize the Nonimmigrant and Immigrant Employment-Based System with E-Filing**– The government, employers and workers need a predictable and reliable system that provides the green cards and L, H-1B and other nonimmigrant visas needed to recruit, deploy, transfer and retain top world talent. USCIS must come into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and support a fully electronic system for filing, whether for electronic I-9s or employment-based petitions and applications. With the growth of remote work – [Worldwide ERC® recently found that 80 percent of employers](#) with over 10,000 employees anticipate over 50 percent of their workforce will work remotely on a permanent basis – e-filing becomes ever more important.

**Pass key provisions of the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigration Act** – We appreciate the Chair’s and many other bipartisan members of Congress’ support to eliminate the per country green card limits. We believe it is a critical first step for high skilled employees waiting in the green card backlogs that would also help U.S. employers, many in STEM industries, to globally compete. Setting limits on per country green card applicants at seven percent of any one country has created up to decade-long backlogs for many sought-after, highly skilled and educated immigrants, regardless of their date of filing. Eliminating the per country limits would create a first-come first-served green card system, that allows applicants with an approved immigrant petition to keep their place in the green card line and helps address the backlog. This result would put the talent and skills professionals bring to the economy before a beneficiary’s country of birth.

**Increase Certainty and Save Resources with Trusted Employer** – We also believe the Chair’s support and other bipartisan Members of Congress’ support of a Trusted Employer program should be a part of reform efforts and would help eliminate any abuses by pre-certifying immigration-compliant employers, saving resources for top government priorities. This program would also help increase business certainty in workforce planning and mobility similar to a Trusted Traveler or Pre-Check and Trusted Shipper.

Worldwide ERC® and the workforce mobility and relocation professionals we represent look forward to working with the Subcommittee and being a resource to you on improving worker immigration policy and again thank you for the opportunity to provide you with a written statement.

*Worldwide ERC® is the professional association for employee mobility professionals. Since 1964, Worldwide ERC® has been committed to connecting and educating workforce mobility professionals across the globe. A global not-for-profit organization, we are headquartered in Washington, D.C., with offices in London and Shanghai, and are the source of global mobility knowledge and innovation in talent management from Europe, the Middle East and Africa, to Asia and across the Americas.*

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