

Immigration Policy Separates Nuclear Family

Unitefamilies.org urges Congress to act on proposed HR 1823 to revive the temporary, non-immigrant V-visa for legal permanent residents who are separated from their spouses and minor children.

Washington, D.C. (PRWEB) May 2, 2005 -- Unitefamilies.org, an organized group of legal residents (website: www.unitefamilies.org), is urging congressional representatives to support HR 1823 proposed by Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX) and Rep. Robert Andrews (D-NJ). This bill will amend provisions of the V-visa – a temporary, non-immigrant visa type - and help unite spouses and minor children of legal immigrants.

Many legal permanent residents (green card holders) are currently living in the United States, separated from their spouses and infant children. They are waiting for their I-130 petitions (petition for relative) to be approved. Statutory numerical limitations on available visas, coupled with immigration backlogs, causes waiting times of 5 years or more. Legal immigrants feel that it is unfair and cruel to break up nuclear families.

During this long wait, the foreign resident spouse and young children are not allowed to enter the United States, even for a brief visit. The permanent residents, on the other hand, must reside predominantly in the United States and thus the web of US immigration laws ruthlessly separates married couples from each other and from young children.

Unitefamilies.org is supporting HR1823, which will amend the current restrictions on V-visa and make it usable by foreign resident spouses and minor children of legal immigrants to enter the US temporarily while their I-130 petitions are pending with the Immigration department. Removing the current restrictions on V-visa will allow legal residents to unite with their immediate families and thereby end years of family separation.

Acting on this bill will fulfill President Bush's promise that he made during his 2000 campaign: "If we are a nation that believes in family values, we need to help husbands and wives and children of permanent residents be allowed to visit while the INS is handling their paperwork."

Unitefamilies.org urges its members and concerned citizens to write and call their congressional representatives to act on the proposed bill. Keeping husbands and wives separated from each other and from young children is sending wrong messages about American family values.

Group members point out the contradiction that is in the current political atmosphere: the claims to promote family and moral values, yet having policies that break up families – immediate families of law abiding, taxpaying legal immigrants.

"Our Immigration laws and procedures are very complicated and they even appear tough. However, divided families and forcefully separated couples talk of the ugly and inhumane side of our Immigration Laws.

We seldom hear or think of the Legal Immigrants -those who became immigrants through legal procedures, those who never broke any law. Recent debates on the hill are intended to help illegal immigrants only. Congress ignores the suffering of taxpaying, law-abiding legal immigrants", the group says.

The nucleus of Legal Permanent Residents' families is shattered due to separation from spouses and minor children – thanks to contradictions in the current immigration law.

All types of temporary guest workers and even students are allowed to bring their spouses, children and even parents to the US without any delay. However, the same immigration law forces a taxpaying, legal immigrant to wait for a minimum of 5 years to be united with his/her foreign resident spouse and infant child.

“It is appalling that such contradictions within the law have so far escaped notice. It is time Washington lawmakers took a good look at the heartbreaking stories coming out from legal immigrants of this country”, says Unitefamilies.org.

Amending provisions of existing non-immigrant, temporary V-visa will provide relief to separated families and at the same time will ensure ample time for the Congress to evaluate and reform nation's immigration laws.

A similar and parallel solution (K-visa) exists for U.S. citizens to help them bring foreign resident spouses and children to the US.

It is unfortunate that our immigration laws unfairly discriminate against legal immigrants. What is more ironical is the fact that our immigration laws are more hostile to taxpaying legal immigrants than to temporary workers and students-group says.

Unitefamilies.org is a volunteer group and growing strongly. New members, mostly victims of family separation caused by unfair immigration laws, are joining this group every day. Group's website can be found at www.unitefamilies.org

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