



## Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Feinstein Amendment to Cut Increase in Visas for Skilled Foreign Workers

*-- Feinstein's amendment cut a proposed increase in H1-B Visas in half --*

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**Washington, DC** – Concerned that a dramatic increase in visas for skilled foreign workers (H1-B) could cost American's jobs, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today offered an amendment in the Senate Judiciary Committee to cut the proposed increase in half – from 60,000 to 30,000 additional visas. This would bring the total number of H1-B visas available for skilled foreign workers each year to 95,000.

**“What I don't want to see is Americans lose jobs to foreign workers or Americans not have opportunity for these jobs,”** Senator Feinstein said. **“I think there needs to be further study of whether there is in fact a shortage of American workers to fill these jobs, and I have asked for a hearing in the Judiciary Committee.”**

**“My goal in offering this amendment was to minimize potential job loss, and in fact we were able to cut the increase in half. I believe that the 30,000 is sufficient at this time. If it turns out that there aren't sufficient Americans qualified to hold computer-related jobs, which are 27 percent of the total H1-B visas, the Committee can make a further adjustment.”**

The amendment, which the Committee approved by a vote of 13-3, would also increase the fees for L-1 Visas (temporary visas for multinational managers and executives) by \$750, bringing the total cost for an L-1 visa to \$1,435. The additional \$750 must be paid by the employer.

The estimate of revenue raised by Senator Feinstein's amendment has yet to be determined.

In addition, the legislative proposal approved by the committee would:

- “Recapture” unused green card numbers from previous years and applying them in the future. It is projected that this could mean the issuance of up to 90,000 additional green cards per year. Right now, each year 140,000 green cards can be issued to skilled workers coming to the United States – such as outstanding professors and researchers, scientists, artists, executives, managers.
- Change the way immigrant visa numbers are counted (*i.e.*, how green cards are counted)

by counting only the worker toward the overall employment green card cap of 140,000, and not their spouses and children. Currently, workers *and* their dependents count toward the green card cap which consequently means that the cap is reached sooner.

- Impose a new \$500 fee per application on “recaptured” numbers of green cards and H-1B visas. This means that H-1B visas in this category will cost \$2,685 and green cards will cost \$815.

Under budget reconciliation instructions, the Judiciary Committee has been tasked with finding \$300 million in either cuts or revenue increases, and there are few options for the Committee.

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