

September 10, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for Immigration Reform

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We, the undersigned chief human resource officers of major corporations doing business in the United States, are writing to urge the House to enact legislation to fix the broken immigration system and work with the Senate to ensure that a bill is signed by the President this year. We believe this would be a long overdue step toward aligning our nation's immigration policies with its workforce needs at all skill levels to ensure U.S. global competitiveness, and we are hopeful that the House will address these needs. The Senate bill is not a perfect measure and many of us hope to work with the House to enact more favorable provisions in certain areas.

Two years ago, the HR Policy Association, which represents the most senior human resource executives at the largest companies in the United States—and of which we are all members—issued a *Blueprint for Jobs in the 21st Century*, which provided a number of recommendations for restoring growth and competitiveness in the U.S. Among these was a recommendation that immigration reform “address the reality that there is a global war for talent and that countries are competing to attract and retain the human capital essential to a culture of productivity and innovation.” The report contained a number of recommendations aimed at attracting and retaining immigrants with strong science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills. The Senate bill includes strong provisions along the lines of our recommendations, and we would encourage the House to adopt a similar approach.

Even with the economy still recovering, many of our companies continue to have difficulty finding sufficient American workers to fill certain lesser-skilled positions. Thus, in addition to addressing the need for more highly skilled immigrants, we strongly support efforts to bolster the availability of a workforce at all skills levels, through a separate visa program as well as by creating a path to legal status for those already here. Finally, we urge you to improve the E-Verify system so employers can rely on its results without fear of legal liability and to preserve federal preemption to ensure uniform application of the enforcement rules across the country.

The economic benefits of broad immigration reform were recently underscored by the Congressional Budget Office cost estimate regarding the Senate bill. In addition to finding that the bill would reduce the federal deficit by about \$197 billion over the next decade, it also estimates the bill would increase real GDP (adjusted for inflation) by 3.3 percent by 2023 and 5.4 percent by 2033. Clearly, the positive human resource impact of the bill plays a key role in these estimates, as CBO projects that the bill would increase the U.S. population by about 10.4 million new residents by 2023 and 16.2 million by 2033, with the U.S. labor force growing by about six million workers (3.5%) by 2023 and about nine million (5%) by 2033.

Our global competitors understand that attracting top talent from around the world is vital to a country's economic success, and many already have rewritten their immigration policies accordingly. We urge Congress not to miss this opportunity to level the playing field for U.S. employers. We can't afford to wait.

Sincerely,

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