



Speaker John Boehner
1011 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner,

As the House of Representatives considers a number of possible reforms to America's broken immigration system, we offer support for an overhaul that secures our borders, allows for a market-driven future flow of legal immigrants, and provides a tough but humane process to earned legal status for those undocumented immigrants who wish to stay in the United States and continue to be productive members of our society.

The U.S. Senate passed a bill last week that we consider progress. But members of the House will correctly pursue their own legislation. This will ensure that any final product has considerable conservative input, and that certain aspects of the Senate bill are markedly improved. Whether a comprehensive bill or a piecemeal approach, we support an immigration reform package that reflects the economic contributions that immigrants make to our country.

The House should seek to dramatically increase legal immigration by providing more visas to both low-skilled and high-skilled immigrants. Allowing more workers into the country will increase growth of our labor force and while making it more dynamic and productive. Low-skilled workers play a complementary role to native-born Americans, increasing GDP and wages. High-skilled immigrants create jobs here at home through innovation and entrepreneurship.

While the Senate bill increases visa caps, it does not go far enough. The House might look to the character of amendments introduced in the Senate that ultimately failed, such as those offered by Senators Lee and Toomey, which would have dramatically increased the cap on low-skilled visas, or Senator Cruz, which would have provided more high-skilled visas.

Legislation that moves through the House should also reflect that jobs are the magnets for more immigration, not welfare. The ultimate solution is broad reform of welfare and entitlements, but immigration reform should not make these problems worse in the interim. The Senate bill includes some serious welfare restrictions, but an amendment proposed by Senators Hatch and Rubio would have applied a five-year waiting period for green card holders to apply for Obamacare benefits. Actions such as this to wall off the welfare state are a responsible part of immigration overhaul.

As conservatives, we believe in free markets and private sector-led economic growth. Unfortunately, both of these are hampered under the current broken immigration system. We urge the House to take up a comprehensive package of immigration reforms – be it one bill or many – that secures our border, increases the legal flow of workers, and deals sensibly with the undocumented population.

Sincerely,

Douglas Holtz-Eakin
President
American Action Forum

Grover Norquist
President
Americans for Tax Reform

Al Cardenas
Chairman
American Conservative Union