



Congress of the United States House of Representatives

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SENATE PLANS TO SELL IMMIGRATION VISAS TO FIX BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressmen John Hostettler (R-IN), Tom Tancredo (R-CO), and Lamar Smith (R-TX) questioned the Senate Judiciary Committee's plan to dramatically increase visas. The Judiciary Committee's budget reconciliation plan allows an additional 350,000 immigrants per year to stream across the border—that's one-third more immigrants than the one million that are currently allowed. The extra fees from visa applications would help the Committee reach its budget target for the year.

Congressman John Hostettler, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims, stated, "This would only exacerbate the problems of our immigration system, it is a bad idea on so many levels. Instead of sending the signal that America is for sale, the Senate should look for ways to curb spending. We do not need to raise revenue at the expense of our immigration system."

Tancredo agreed, "Everyone knows that our immigration system is dysfunctional. Increasing its workload by a third in one year is a recipe for disaster," said Tancredo. "Senate Judiciary's backdoor visa bonanza would increase overall immigration by one-third, even though every major poll shows Americans want less immigration, not more of it. The Committee did this in the dark of the night—without hearings and without public comment—because that's the only way they can get away with it. When this plan is brought to the light of day, the American people will be outraged."

The employment-based permanent immigration cap currently is 140,000 visas per year. The Judiciary Committee proposal raises that number to 230,000 and exempts workers' families from that cap. Based on family statistics from the last four fiscal years, the Committee's proposal could raise total employment-based permanent immigration by more than 350,000 per year.

Congressman Lamar Smith, former chairman of the Immigration Subcommittee, said, "This measure is a behind-the-scenes permanent foreign worker program that will take jobs from American workers. To raise the number of employment-based visas by such a significant amount without the benefit of committee hearings, floor debate, or even public input is not fair to the American people who oppose an increase in immigration."

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