

The Defense Production Act, first enacted in 1950, ensures that products, materials, and services essential to our national security are available to defense related agencies at all times—but especially in times of conflict. One material that is especially critical to our defense needs is steel. Our armed forces would not be able to respond to a national emergency without an adequate supply of domestically produced steel.

But at this very moment, the American steel industry is in dire straits. In recent months a number of steel companies have been driven into bankruptcy, and others are on the brink. Thousands of jobs are at risk, as another wave of low-cost steel imports has battered the domestic industry. In my home district, LTV Steel, which employs thousands of Cleveland residents, is undergoing bankruptcy proceedings and has had to idle one of its plants.

A bill I introduced, the Steel and National Security Act, would have amended the Defense Production Act to enable the President to step in and aid critical defense industries such as steel. In its findings, the Steel and National Security Act identifies domestic steel capacity as an essential part of what a key executive order has called the “foundation for national defense preparedness”: our domestic industrial and technological base.

To revive and secure the health of the American steel industry and thereby ensure adequate domestic capacity, the Steel and National Security Act would reauthorize the Defense Production Act’s Title III, with a specific allocation of \$1 billion in each of the fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004 for Department of Defense loans, grants and purchase commitments. Fifty percent of each year’s allocated funds would be reserved for purchase commitments, to ensure that ailing industries are given a sharp boost.

The bill would also establish a National Defense Preparedness Domestic Industrial Base Board. The Board would be responsible, through one time en masse purchases and other means, for ensuring uninterrupted availability of defense-related materials. Together, these provisions would ensure enough demand so that domestic industries critical to our national security—like steel—can survive tough times.

But that is not all my bill would accomplish. The Steel and National Security Act would also reauthorize Defense Production Act’s Title VII, with a specific directive ordering the Department of Defense to request a 45-day period of further investigation for all mergers, acquisitions, and takeovers involving a foreign steel company. This would ensure that domestic capacity to produce materials and goods essential to our national security always exists.

Madam Speaker, though the House has acted correctly in extending the Defense Production Act to 2004, it has not acted decisively to aid those industries most vital to our national security.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2510.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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PROVIDING WORK AUTHORIZATION FOR NONIMMIGRANT SPOUSES OF TREATY TRADERS AND TREATY INVESTORS

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2277) to provide for work authorization for non-immigrant spouses of treaty traders and treaty investors.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2277

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. WORK AUTHORIZATION FOR SPOUSES OF TREATY TRADERS AND TREATY INVESTORS.

Section 214(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(6) In the case of an alien spouse admitted under section 101(a)(15)(E), who is accompanying or following to join a principal alien admitted under such section, the Attorney General shall authorize the alien spouse to engage in employment in the United States and provide the spouse with an ‘employment authorized’ endorsement or other appropriate work permit.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2277.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today the House is likely to approve, for the fourth and fifth time this year, pro-family, pro-immigrant legislation that we have crafted in the Committee on the Judiciary. This body can be proud of the work it has done upholding the Nation’s tradition of welcoming immigrants to our shores in a responsible manner.

This particular bill, H.R. 2277, would allow spouses of E visa recipients to

work in the United States while accompanying the primary visa recipients.

E visas are available for treaty traders and investors. A visa is available to an alien who “is entitled to enter the United States under and in pursuance of the provisions of a treaty of commerce and navigation between the United States and the foreign state of which he is a national . . . solely to carry on substantial trade, including trade in services or trade in technology, principally between the United States and the foreign state of which he is a national, or . . . solely to develop and direct the operations of an enterprise in which he has invested . . . a substantial amount of capital.”

Alien employees of a treaty trader or treaty investor may receive E visas if they are coming to the U.S. to engage in duties of an executive or supervisory character, or, if employed in the lesser capacity, if they have special qualifications that make the services to be rendered essential to the efficient operation of the enterprise. The alien employee would need to be of the same nationality as the treaty trader or investor.

For fiscal year 1998, 9,457 aliens, including dependents, were granted E visas as treaty traders; and 20,775 aliens, including dependents, were granted E visas as treaty investors.

While current law allows spouses and minor children to come to the U.S. with the E visa recipients, spouses are not allowed to work in the United States. Since working spouses are now becoming the rule rather than the exception in our society and in many foreign countries, multinational corporations are finding it increasingly difficult to persuade their employees abroad to relocate to the United States.

Spouses, often wives, hesitate to forego their own career ambitions or a second income to accommodate an overseas assignment. This factor places an impediment in the way of the use by employees from treaty countries of the E visa program and their contributing to trade with and invest in the United States.

There is no good reason why we should put an impediment in the way of the business’s effort to attract talented people. There is no good reason why husbands and wives should have to ask their spouses to forego employment as a condition of joining them in America.

Thus H.R. 2277 would simply allow the spouses of E visa recipients to work in the United States while accompanying the primary visa recipient. Families will no longer have to choose between the advancement of either spouse’s career in order to grasp an opportunity to come to America.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2277. While current law allows spouses to come to the United States with E visa holders, spouses are not allowed to work in the United States. H.R. 2277 would allow these spouses work authorization in the United States while accompanying the E visa holder.

It does not make any sense whatsoever to allow spouses to accompany their partners to the United States and then deny them the opportunity to be employed. Furthermore, this bill makes the time these families live in the United States financially easier since it allows for a second income.

Madam Speaker, I hope that this bill is the beginning of an understanding that we should allow spouses in other nonimmigrant classifications who accompany their husband or wife to the United States to be able to obtain work authorization.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2277.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR WORK AUTHORIZATION FOR NONIMMIGRANT SPOUSES OF INTRACOMPANY TRANSFEREES

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2278) to provide work authorization for nonimmigrant spouses of intracompany transferees, and to reduce the period of time during which certain intracompany transferees have to be continuously employed before applying for admission to the United States.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2278

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. WORK AUTHORIZATION FOR SPOUSES OF INTRACOMPANY TRANSFEREES.

Section 214(c)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(c)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "(E) In the case of an alien spouse admitted under section 101(a)(15)(L), who is accompanying or following to join a principal alien

admitted under such section, the Attorney General shall authorize the alien spouse to engage in employment in the United States and provide the spouse with an 'employment authorized' endorsement or other appropriate work permit.'"

SEC. 2. REDUCTION OF REQUIRED PERIOD OF PRIOR CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT FOR CERTAIN INTRACOMPANY TRANSFEREES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 214(c)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(c)(2)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"In the case of an alien seeking admission under section 101(a)(15)(L), the one-year period of continuous employment required under such section is deemed to be reduced to a 6-month period if the importing employer has filed a blanket petition under this subparagraph and met the requirements for expedited processing of aliens covered under such petition.'"

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(L)) is amended by striking "an alien who," and inserting "subject to section 214(c)(2), an alien who.'"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2278.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a companion bill to H.R. 2277, just passed. Just as H.R. 2277 provides employment authorization to spouses of E visa recipients, this bill provides employment authorization to spouses of L visa recipients.

L visas are available for intracompany transferees. They allow employees working at a company's overseas branch to be shifted to the company's work site in the United States.

An L visa is available to an alien who "within 3 years preceding the time of his application for admission into the United States has been employed continuously for one year by a firm or an affiliate or subsidiary and who seeks to enter the United States temporarily in order to continue to render his services to the same employer in a capacity that is managerial, executive or involves specialized knowledge."

To make the L visa program more convenient for established and frequent users of the program, blanket L visas are available. If an employer meets certain qualifications, such as having

received approval for at least 10 L visa professionals during the past year or having U.S. subsidiaries or affiliates with an annual combined sales of at least \$25 million or having a workforce of at least 1,000 employees, the employer can receive preapproval for an unlimited number of L visas from the Immigration Service.

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Individual aliens seeking visas to work for the companies simply have to show that the job they will be employed in qualifies for the L visa program and that they are qualified to do the job.

In fiscal year 1998, 38,307 aliens, along with 44,176 dependents, were granted L visas.

While the current law allows spouses and minor children to come to the U.S. with the L visa recipients, spouses are not allowed to work in this country. As I stated in regard to H.R. 2277, working spouses are now becoming the rule rather than the exception in the U.S. and in many foreign countries, and multinational companies are finding it increasingly difficult to persuade their employees abroad to relocate to the United States if it means their spouses will have to forgo employment. This factor places an impediment in the way of these employers' use of the L visa program and their competitiveness in the international economy.

There is no good reason why we should put an impediment in the way of business and academia's efforts to attract talented people. There is also no good reason why husbands and wives should have to ask their spouses to forgo employment as a condition of joining them in America. Thus, H.R. 2278 would allow the spouses of L visa recipients to work in the United States while accompanying the primary visa recipients.

Additionally, the current law requires that the beneficiary of an L visa have been employed for at least 1 year overseas by the petitioning employer. In many situations, this is an overly restrictive requirement. For example, consulting agencies often recruit and hire individuals overseas with specialized skills to meet the needs of particular clients. The 1-year-prior-employment requirement can result in long delays before they can bring such employees into the United States on an L visa. A shorter prior employment period would allow companies to more expeditiously meet the needs of their clients.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 2278 would allow aliens to qualify for L visas after having worked for 6 months overseas for employers if the employers have filed blanket L petitions and have met the blanket petition's requirements. There is a high level of fraud in the L visa program, especially involving "front companies" set up purely to