



Comprehensive Immigration Reform for Individuals

Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) refers to pending legislation in the U.S. Congress, which addresses a number of immigration issues such as a legalization process for the millions of undocumented immigrants and a temporary worker program.

CIR Legislative Update (as of 10/29/10)

Separate legislation has been introduced in both the House and the Senate including a process to achieve legal status for current undocumented workers. Similar key provisions in both proposals are contingent on requirements, including a new electronic employment verification system and other security measures.

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2010

Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced S.B. 3932, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2010 (CIR 2010) at the end of September 2010.

Key bill provisions of CIR 2010 include:

- A legalization program for qualified undocumented immigrants (and their spouses and children), including undocumented individuals who came to the U.S. before the age of 16 (DREAM Act) and unauthorized farm workers (AgJOBS Act)
- Enhanced border security and interior enforcement measures
- Creation of a standing commission on immigration to regulate employment-based visas
- Requirement of an employment verification system
- Emphasis on keeping families together
- Improvement of the integration of new Americans

Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009

Rep. Solomon Ortiz (D-TX) and Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) introduced H.R. 4321, Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009 (CIR ASAP), at the end of 2009.

Key bill provisions of CIR ASAP include:

- A legalization program for qualified undocumented immigrants (and their spouses and children), including undocumented individuals who came to the U.S. before the age of 16 (DREAM Act) and unauthorized farm workers (AgJOBS Act)
- Enhanced border security
- Requirement of an employment verification system
- Legal system reform and proactive management of future legal immigration flows
- Reformation of enforcement activities (but repeal of the 287(g) program)
- Improvement of detention conditions
- Emphasis on keeping U.S. families together
- Improvement of the naturalization process and integration of new Americans

CIR Overview - continued

While two bills have been introduced in Congress, CIR is currently at a standstill and no legislation has been passed into law. However, potentially affected employees should monitor legislative happenings and begin preparing now for the implications.

Individual Preparation & Protection

- Check and confirm your status
 - If you have been in the U.S. without a current visa, you may be still be eligible for legal status in the U.S. for various reasons such as:
 - You have family members with U.S. citizenship, or
 - You are political asylee or refugee
- Remain informed on pending legislation
 - Monitor recognized immigration news for the latest updates
- Beware of “predators” trying to capitalize on CIR
 - Legislation has not been finalized so there are no available visas, preparation forms or additional paperwork that can be completed at this time
 - Avoid any provider trying to collect an up front fee or payment
 - Limit your interaction to licensed legal providers and recognizable entities such as non-profit, charitable or social services
- Begin gathering evidence or documentation of following:
 - Residency in the U.S.: Lease, utility bill, bank statement
 - Employment: Employment verification letter, paycheck stub
 - Paid Taxes: Tax return, paycheck stub
- Start saving or budgeting for legalization fee payment
 - Sizeable fees are expected in the application process once legislation is passed