

**THE
JURIS DOCTOR
IMMIGRATION LAW WATCH**

**Daniel H. McKinney & Associates
Immigration Law Group**

**A NEWSLETTER FOCUSING
ON IMMIGRATION LAW**

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FEBRUARY, 2004

BUSH PROPOSES NEW TEMPORARY WORKER VISA

On January 7, President Bush proposed significant liberalization of U.S. immigration policy in an effort to "make immigration laws more rational and humane". Toward that end, Bush asked congress to pass a temporary worker immigration law which would allow workers to enter the United States and fill jobs that Americans are not filling and avoid the exploitation and abuse that illegal immigrant workers often face. According to Bush, any new immigration law should protect United States borders, serve the economic needs of the country, not unfairly reward illegal immigrants in the citizenship process and provide incentives for temporary workers to return permanently to their home country.

All who participate in the temporary worker program must have a job or a job offer. The legal status granted will last three years with the potential to renew. Person who do not remain employed, follow the rules of the program, or who break any laws will be required to return home. Temporary workers will be issued a temporary worker travel card that will allow them to travel between their home country and the U. S.

American employers must be required to make every reasonable effort to find an American worker and the law should provide a quick and simple system for employers to search for American workers. Employers must report who they hired and report when they leave in order to keep track of the worker and enforce immigration laws. Undocumented

workers now in the U.S. should be required to pay a fee to register for the program.

There should be financial incentives for temporary workers to return to their home country, including the creation of tax-preferred savings accounts so they can take money back with them.

There should be no change in permanent legal residence laws giving temporary workers unfair advantage over those who have been waiting to immigrate. However, immigrant waits are too long and limits on immigration too low and this should be changed according th Bush.

Whether Bush's idea becomes law is too soon to tell, but observers say it's not likely this year. There is usually an attempt to draft major immigration bills in a bipartisan manner but this is an election year and that seems unlikely. But it does seem that if temporary worker immigration is going to pass this year, it will require Bush to throw his influence behind it and spend political capital. In fact, many have expressed the opinion that the proposal is a thinly disguised reelection ploy with which Democrats do not want to assist and conservative Republicans oppose. Interestingly, Bush seems to have made strange bedfellows of conservatives and liberals: liberals oppose the proposal saying it does not go far enough in helping immigrants and conservatives say it rewards foreigners who broke the law when entering the country. Stay tuned.

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