

EWIC STATEMENT
May 3, 2023

Business Community Urges Congress to Address Legal Immigration Reform Needs

The Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC) acknowledges the Secure the Border Act of 2023, H.R. 2. This legislation proposes an enforcement-focused approach to addressing large-scale humanitarian migration at the United States-Mexico border, as well as unauthorized immigration more generally. While more effective border security and enforcement mechanisms are vital to addressing the problem, EWIC believes that reform of the legal immigration system is equally important to dealing with security concerns along with U.S. economic needs.

EWIC's members believe that creating a legal pathway for foreign workers to enter the U.S. in accord with economic demand is a key component of reforming our nation's broken immigration system and enhancing enforcement against unauthorized immigration. Current law provides no year-round temporary worker visa for a large portion of our economy, and EWIC supports reform of U.S. immigration policy to help meet current workforce needs and grow our economy.

We support legislation to address chronic workforce shortages and help reduce future illegal immigration. We need a balanced U.S. immigration system that includes a commonsense visa system, allowing the U.S. government to ensure that workers and employers are utilizing the system as intended, and that the program is operating in a way that helps U.S. workers and the economy. Additionally, we support the provisions in H.R. 2 which would phase in use of the E-Verify system by all employers to verify the work authorization status of all new hires, and we appreciate the provisions designed to minimize potential burdens on employers as use of this government program is greatly expanded.

In order to truly have a secure border, we must address the lack of a visa program for a significant portion of the U.S. economy and provide an opportunity to fix a critical gap in immigration law. We urge Congress to work on border security, asylum reform and legal workforce measures and reform to bring common sense solutions to our nation's decades-old challenges in immigration policy.

The Essential Worker Immigration Coalition (EWIC) is a coalition of businesses, trade associations, and other organizations from across the industry spectrum concerned with the shortage of both lesser skilled and unskilled ("essential worker") labor. EWIC stands ready to work with the Administration and Congress to push forward on important immigration reform issues.