

One Hundred Seventeenth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday,
the third day of January, two thousand and twenty two*

An Act

To require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a study of the factors affecting employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees with professional credentials obtained in foreign countries.

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPLICABLE IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES.—The term “applicable immigrants and refugees”—

(A) means individuals who—

(i)(I) are not citizens or nationals of the United States; and

(II) are lawfully present in the United States and authorized to be employed in the United States; or

(ii) are naturalized citizens of the United States who were born outside of the United States and its outlying possessions; and

(B) includes individuals described in section 602(b)(2) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 (title VI of division F of Public Law 111–8; 8 U.S.C. 1101 note).

(2) OTHER TERMS.—Except as otherwise defined in this section, terms used in this Act have the definitions given such terms under section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)).

SEC. 3. STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES WITH PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS OBTAINED IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in coordination with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Administrator of the Internal Revenue Service, and the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, shall conduct a study of the factors affecting employment opportunities in the United States for applicable immigrants and refugees who have professional credentials that were obtained in a country other than the United States.

(2) WORK WITH OTHER ENTITIES.—The Secretary of Labor shall seek to work with relevant nonprofit organizations and State agencies to use the existing data and resources of such entities to conduct the study required under paragraph (1).

(3) LIMITATIONS ON DISCLOSURE.—Any information provided to the Secretary of Labor in connection with the study required under paragraph (1)—

(A) may only be used for the purposes of, and to the extent necessary to ensure the efficient operation of, such study; and

(B) may not be disclosed to any other person or entity except as provided under this subsection.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The study required under subsection (a)(1) shall include—

(1) an analysis of the employment history of applicable immigrants and refugees admitted to the United States during the 5-year period immediately preceding the date of the enactment of this Act, which shall include, to the extent practicable—

(A) a comparison of the employment applicable immigrants and refugees held before immigrating to the United States with the employment they obtained in the United States, if any, since their arrival; and

(B) the occupational and professional credentials and academic degrees held by applicable immigrants and refugees before immigrating to the United States;

(2) an assessment of any barriers that prevent applicable immigrants and refugees from using occupational experience obtained outside the United States to obtain employment in the United States;

(3) an analysis of available public and private resources assisting applicable immigrants and refugees who have professional experience and qualifications obtained outside of the United States to obtain skill-appropriate employment in the United States; and

(4) policy recommendations for better enabling applicable immigrants and refugees who have professional experience and qualifications obtained outside of the United States to obtain skill-appropriate employment in the United States.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall—

(1) submit a report to Congress that describes the results of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (a); and

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(2) make such report publicly available on the website of the Department of Labor.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

*Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.*