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Compete America Applauds Senate Inclusion of H-1B Visa and EB Green Card Relief Provisions in Comprehensive Immigration Bill

Senate Acts to Relieve Crisis Facing U.S. Employers of Highly Educated Foreign Nationals

Bingaman Amendment Viewed as Problematic

Washington D.C. – Compete America today applauded the Senate for including critically important provisions to reform both the H-1B visa and employment based (EB visa) green card processes. Both the H-1B and EB visa programs are designed to facilitate the legal employment of highly educated foreign nationals, and are critical to American competitiveness.

"A bipartisan Senate has taken a very big step towards resolving a chronic problem facing U.S. employers," said Sandra Boyd, National Association of Manufacturers Human Resources Policy Vice President and Compete America Chair. "The Senate recognizes that America benefits from the contributions of highly educated foreign nationals."

Among the key provisions approved by the Senate and endorsed by Compete America are the following:

- Raising the cap on H-1B visas for highly educated temporary workers to 115,000 with a flexible market-based annual adjustment.
- Raising the EB visa cap and exempting key categories of workers.
- Exemptions for both H-1B cap and EB visa caps for certain workers who have earned an advanced degree in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

"The H-1B and EB visa reform provisions adopted by the Senate are reasonable and long overdue. With the FY 2007 H-1B cap likely to be reached soon, and with backlogs in all employment based categories growing, it is imperative that meaningful reform occur this year," said Lynn Shotwell, Executive Director of the American Council on International Personnel.

Despite a very positive reaction to the H-1B and EB visa provisions, Compete America cautioned that the Bingaman Amendment will likely result in additional green card backlogs in the very near future.

Compete America (www.competeamerica.org) is a coalition of more than 200 corporations, universities, research institutions and trade associations concerned about legal, employment-based immigration and committed to ensuring that the United States has the highly educated workforce necessary to ensure continued innovation, job creation and leadership in a worldwide economy.