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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

November 28, 2012
(House Rules)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 6429 – STEM Jobs Act of 2012

(Rep. Smith, R-Texas, and 68 cosponsors)

The Administration values reforms to attract the next generation of highly-skilled immigrants, including legislation to attract and retain foreign students who graduate with advanced science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees; however, the Administration opposes House passage of H.R. 6429. This legislation, if enacted, would allocate immigrant visas for advanced graduates of a limited set of STEM degree programs, would offer a limited number of visas for families through the "V" nonimmigrant visa program, and would eliminate the long-standing Diversity Visa program that makes immigrant visas available to certain individuals from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States.

The Administration is deeply committed to building a 21st-century immigration system that meets the Nation's economic and security needs through common-sense, comprehensive immigration reform. As a part of immigration reform, the Administration strongly supports legislation to attract and retain foreign students who graduate with advanced STEM degrees, to establish a start-up visa for foreign-born entrepreneurs to start businesses and create jobs, and to reform the employment-based immigration system to better meet the needs of the U.S. economy. However, the Administration does not support narrowly tailored proposals that do not meet the President's long-term objectives with respect to comprehensive immigration reform.

The Administration is encouraged that the Congress appears to be ready to begin serious debate on the need to fix our broken immigration system and looks forward to working with both Democrats and Republicans to enact a common-sense approach that includes reforms to the legal immigration system. Such an approach must provide for attracting and retaining highly skilled immigrants and uniting Americans with their family members more quickly, as well as other important priorities such as establishing a pathway for undocumented individuals to earn their citizenship, holding employers accountable for breaking the law, and continuing efforts to strengthen the Nation's robust enforcement system.

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