

**APRIL 2007
VISA AVAILABILITY**

The bulletin issued by the Visa Office of the Bureau of Consular Affairs of the U.S. Department of State gives the following availability position for issuance of immigrant visas during April 2007:

Persons Chargeable to India

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	May 08, 2001
2nd Preference	
2A	Apr 01, 2002
2B	Aug 15, 1997
3rd Preference	Mar 22, 1999
4th Preference	Jan 01, 1996

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Current
2nd Preference	Jan 08, 2003
3rd Preference	May 08, 2001
Other Workers	Oct 01, 2001
4 th Preference	Current
Certain Religious Workers	Current
Iraqi & Afghani Translators	Sep 18, 2006
5th Preference Targeted Emp Areas	Current

Persons Chargeable to Other Countries

For other chargeability areas, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and the nations of Africa, the cut-off dates for April 2007 are:

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	May 08, 2001
2nd Preference	
2A	Apr 01, 2002
2B	Aug 15, 1997
3rd Preference	Mar 22, 1999
4th Preference	May 01, 1996

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Current
2nd Preference	Current
3rd Preference	Aug 01, 2002
Other Workers	Oct 01, 2001
4th Preference	Current
Certain Religious Workers	Current
Iraqi & Afghani Translators	Sep 18, 2006
5th Preference Targeted Emp Areas	Current

STRIVE ACT of 2007

A bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill known as SECURITY THROUGH REGULARIZED IMMIGRATION AND A VIBRANT ECONOMY (STRIVE) Act of 2007 was introduced in the House on 22nd March by Reps. Gutierrez (D-IL) and Flake (R-AZ). The bill contains certification requirements that must be met before implementation of the New Worker Program and the program to legalize undocumented individuals. It also envisions setting up of an employment verification system for employers to verify all new hires' work authorization.

The bill creates a legal channel for future immigrant workers (and their spouses and children) by establishing the H-2C visa, which is valid for three years and renewable for another three. Employers must attempt to hire U.S. workers by first offering the job to any eligible U.S. worker who applies and is qualified and able. To achieve this, employers must go through a rigorous recruitment process

Of utmost interest to out of status and undocumented aliens are the following provisions in the Bill:

VISA PROGRAM FOR QUALIFIED UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS:

This program envisions creation of a new visa program (conditional nonimmigrant status) for undocumented aliens and their

spouses and children in the U.S., which is valid for six years. Provides conditional nonimmigrant visa applicants with work and travel authorization and protection from removal. Bars related to undocumented status will be waived (security and criminal bars cannot be waived). The following are some key requirements for CONDITIONAL NONIMMIGRANT STATUS:

- **Establish continuous presence in the U.S. on or before June 1, 2006;**
- **Attest to employment in the U. S. before June 1, 2006 and employment since that date;**
- **Complete criminal and security background checks; and**
- **Pay a \$500 fine plus necessary application fees (fine exemption for children).**

These are provisions in the just introduced Bill. As in the case of any Bill, there will be several amendments offered by members of both parties. I shall keep the readers informed of key developments as the Bill progresses.