

Legalization plans

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A summary of the major proposals in Washington:

Temporary guest worker plan

Proposed by: President George W. Bush.

Would issue three-year temporary visas to as many foreign workers as the marketplace can handle.

Would require employers to advertise their jobs first to U.S. citizens on a national database.

Would legalize most illegal workers here who have an employer sponsor.

Would not allow a special path to permanent legal residency; workers would have to apply for a green card under the same, usually lengthy process as all others.

Status: Proposed by Bush in January; has not been put into legislation.

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Agricultural jobs bill

Proposed by: Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho; Rep. Chris Cannon, R-Utah.

Would legalize illegal workers who have worked in agriculture for at least 18 months before Aug. 31 and who pass a criminal background check.

Would give permanent legal status to those who work in agriculture for at least 360 more days within a certain period of time; they then could work in any industry.

Would affect 500,000-850,000 agricultural workers.

Status: Pending in House and Senate committees. Wide support makes it the most likely for passage.

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Immigration improvement act

Proposed by: Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Rep. Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz.

Would legalize illegal workers who have been living and working here before Aug. 1, 2003, who pay a \$1,500 fine and who pass criminal background checks.

Would allow an unlimited number of foreign guest-workers if an employer advertises the jobs for two weeks on a national job registry.

Would permit illegal workers to get temporary, three-year work visas and then apply for

three-year guest-worker visas under which they can eventually become permanent residents.

Status: Pending in House and Senate committees.

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Legal visas act

Proposed by: Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.

Would legalize most illegal workers who can pass a criminal background check and other national security checks.

Would add two temporary-worker programs that would allow as many as 350,000 guest workers each year.

Would allow those living here illegally at least five years and working at least two years before May 4 to qualify immediately for permanent legal residence. Those living here illegally less than five years could apply for temporary legal status and become permanent legal residents after working here for at least two more years.

Status: Introduced last week in the Senate. Only support from Democrats; unlikely to advance.