

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3157

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.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 3, 2021

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COONS, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

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.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPLICABLE IMMIGRANTS AND REFUG-
2 GEES.—The term “applicable immigrants and refu-
3 gees”—

4 (A) means individuals who—

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

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

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

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

18 (2) OTHER TERMS.—Except as otherwise de-
19 fined in this section, terms used in this Act have the
20 definitions given such terms under section 101(a) of
21 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
22 1101(a)).

1 **SEC. 3. STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT OP-**
2 **PORTUNITIES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFU-**
3 **GEES WITH PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS**
4 **OBTAINED IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.**

5 (a) STUDY REQUIRED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in
7 coordination with the Secretary of State, the Sec-
8 retary of Education, the Secretary of Health and
9 Human Services, the Secretary of Commerce, the
10 Secretary of Homeland Security, the Administrator
11 of the Internal Revenue Service, and the Commis-
12 sioner of the Social Security Administration, shall
13 conduct a study of the factors affecting employment
14 opportunities in the United States for applicable im-
15 migrants and refugees who have professional creden-
16 tials that were obtained in a country other than the
17 United States.

18 (2) WORK WITH OTHER ENTITIES.—The Sec-
19 retary of Labor shall seek to work with relevant non-
20 profit organizations and State agencies to use the
21 existing data and resources of such entities to con-
22 duct the study required under paragraph (1).

23 (3) LIMITATIONS ON DISCLOSURE.—Any infor-
24 mation provided to the Secretary of Labor in con-
25 nection with the study required under paragraph
26 (1)—

1 (A) may only be used for the purposes of,
2 and to the extent necessary to ensure the effi-
3 cient operation of, such study; and

4 (B) may not be disclosed to any other per-
5 son or entity except as provided under this sub-
6 section.

7 (b) INCLUSIONS.—The study required under sub-
8 section (a)(1) shall include—

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

14 (A) a comparison of the employment appli-
15 cable immigrants and refugees held before im-
16 migrating to the United States with the employ-
17 ment they obtained in the United States, if any,
18 since their arrival; and

19 (B) the occupational and professional cre-
20 dentials and academic degrees held by applica-
21 ble immigrants and refugees before immigrating
22 to the United States;

23 (2) an assessment of any barriers that prevent
24 applicable immigrants and refugees from using occu-

1 pational experience obtained outside the United
2 States to obtain employment in the United States;

3 (3) an analysis of available public and private
4 resources assisting applicable immigrants and refu-
5 gees who have professional experience and qualifica-
6 tions obtained outside of the United States to obtain
7 skill-appropriate employment in the United States;
8 and

9 (4) policy recommendations for better enabling
10 applicable immigrants and refugees who have profes-
11 sional experience and qualifications obtained outside
12 of the United States to obtain skill-appropriate em-
13 ployment in the United States.

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

17 (1) submit a report to Congress that describes
18 the results of the study conducted pursuant to sub-
19 section (a); and

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

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