

Preparing for Change: Business Immigration After the “Big Beautiful Bill”

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On July 4, 2025, President Donald Trump signed into law the “One Big Beautiful Bill” (H.R. 1) after it passed through Congress. Although the bill is primarily framed as a measure to enhance border security and strengthen immigration enforcement, it also introduces a range of significant changes that directly impact employers and employment-based immigration. Key implications include:

Massive Funding Increase for Enforcement and Compliance

The bill provides over \$170 billion to immigration and border enforcement, significantly increasing funding for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). These funds will support a broad expansion of enforcement efforts, including:

- Greater emphasis on worksite enforcement and audits targeting employers.
- An increase in employer compliance investigations across industries.
- More rigorous vetting procedures for employment-based visa applicants.

New and Increased Fees for Immigration Benefits

Employers and foreign nationals should be prepared for a broad set of new and increased fees. Relevant U.S. agencies are actively updating their official guidance, publishing revised fee schedules, and modifying payment systems to reflect the changes. USCIS has confirmed that their revised fee schedule will apply to all immigration benefit requests sent on or after August 21, 2025. The anticipated fees include:

- A non-waivable “visa integrity fee” for all nonimmigrant visa applicants. Foreign nationals may qualify for reimbursement once the visa expires if they can demonstrate full compliance with the visa’s conditions.
- An increased Form I-94 fee for foreign nationals applying for a new or replacement I-94.
- A filing fee for employment authorization documents (EADs) based on pending asylum claims, parole status, or Temporary Protected Status (TPS).
- A fee for enrollment in the Electronic Visa Update System (EVUS), applicable to Chinese nationals seeking a 10-year U.S. visitor visa (B-1/B-2, B-1, or B-2).
- Fees associated with various applications filed in immigration court, including those related to appeals and motions challenging decisions issued by Immigration Judges or the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).



Restrictions on Humanitarian and Public Benefits Access

The bill imposes new restrictions affecting non-citizens across multiple federal programs, significantly limiting access to healthcare, nutrition assistance, and tax benefits. These limitations also extend to certain U.S. citizen family members of non-citizens.

It's important to distinguish these provisions from the current "public charge" rule, which is designed to deny green cards to individuals likely to become primarily dependent on government assistance. The public charge rule currently applies only to a narrow set of benefits, such as cash assistance for income maintenance, and generally excludes non-cash benefits like most healthcare, nutrition, and housing programs. In contrast, the "Big Beautiful Bill" separately restricts access to many of these non-cash benefits for various noncitizen groups and mixed status families, regardless of whether they would trigger a public charge determination.

The use of these public benefits by a non-citizen or their family members could impact the family's financial stability. This additional financial strain may make it more difficult for some individuals to pursue or continue their U.S. immigration journey.

Expanded Detention and Deportation Operations

The bill significantly expands funding for immigration enforcement within the U.S., with key measures that include:

- Broadened authority for ICE to conduct workplace raids, increasing the likelihood of enforcement actions at job sites.
- Expanded detention capacity, which may impact foreign nationals who do not properly maintain valid immigration status.
- Enhanced collaboration with state and local law enforcement including investigations, detainment, and information sharing.

Technology and Surveillance Enhancements

The bill provides funding for AI-powered vetting systems and non-intrusive inspection technologies at U.S. ports of entry. While these tools are primarily intended to enhance border security, they may also be leveraged to increase scrutiny of employment-based visa holders and the companies that sponsor them.

How Should Employers Respond

Considering the bill's sweeping changes, employers should take proactive measures to reduce risk and maintain compliance. Recommended actions include:



- Conducting internal audits of Form I-9 records and immigration compliance policies to ensure accuracy, consistency, and adherence to federal regulations.
- Reviewing the employer's policies for sponsoring immigrant workers to ensure they remain compliant with current laws, strategically sound, and protected against legal or enforcement risks as immigration regulations evolve.
- Planning for increased filing fees and potential processing delays, including adjustments to immigration budgets and timelines.
- Training HR personnel on new enforcement trends, including the possibility of worksite inspections and government inquiries.

Final Thoughts

The "Big Beautiful Bill" represents a significant shift in U.S. immigration policy, placing a stronger emphasis on enforcement and deterrence rather than accessibility and efficiency. For companies that depend on global talent, this evolving landscape introduces new complexities and potential costs. Staying informed and proactive is more important than ever. If you have questions about how these changes may affect your business or your workforce, we encourage you to contact Grossman Young & Hammond for guidance and support.

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