

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR**
2 **CONGRESS TO PASS BALANCED**
3 **IMMIGRATION REFORM**

4 2008 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: Howard A. Stephenson**

7 House Sponsor: Melvin R. Brown

8
9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor urges Utah's
12 congressional delegation to work with the United States Congress to pass effective and
13 meaningful immigration reform to enhance the workforce of Utah and continue the
14 economic strength of the state's business environment.

15 **Highlighted Provisions:**

16 This resolution:

- 17 ▶ urges Utah's congressional delegation to work with the United States Congress to
18 pass effective and meaningful immigration reform;
- 19 ▶ urges Utah's congressional delegation to work with the United States Congress to
20 ensure that any reform efforts focus primarily on enabling Utah's employers to hire a
21 legal workforce sufficient to meet the needs of Utah industries to enhance the
22 economic growth of the state's private sector;
- 23 ▶ urges Congress to reduce the delay for legal immigration, including reforming visa
24 systems;
- 25 ▶ opposes granting blanket amnesty to undocumented persons;
- 26 ▶ recognizes that addressing the status of millions of undocumented persons currently
27 present in the U.S. is a complex issue; and



28 ~~§→ [→→urges all components of state government to work to ensure that any efforts to effect~~
29 ~~immigration laws, or laws related to Utah's workforce that impact immigration, be~~
30 ~~deferred until Congress passes immigration reform.] ←§~~

31 **Special Clauses:**

32 None

33

34 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

35 WHEREAS, the economic relationship with Mexico, which shares our border, is vital
36 to the United States because Mexico is the United States' second most important trading
37 partner, the United States is Mexico's most important trading partner, and the U.S. is the largest
38 source of direct foreign investment in Mexico;

39 WHEREAS, economic, historic, and cultural ties between the U.S. and Mexico are
40 critical to many U.S. industries, including many in Utah;

41 WHEREAS, as a result of their shared borders and proximity to Mexico, western states,
42 including Utah, suffer a disproportionate financial burden on health care, education, the
43 environment, and criminal justice systems because of unauthorized immigration from Mexico,
44 affecting the economy of the entire region;

45 WHEREAS, the economic impacts may be offset by allowing more legal and readily
46 available foreign workers to enter the U.S.;

47 WHEREAS, seasonal industries, including agriculture and hospitality, historically and
48 currently play a pivotal role in Utah's economy, and are heavily dependent upon a stable and
49 reliable foreign labor pool; and

50 WHEREAS, current immigration law addresses neither documented U.S. labor
51 shortages nor marketplace dynamics, and without a lawful avenue to provide seasonal
52 employees, encourages continued unlawful immigration to the U.S. which continues to
53 negatively impact the state's economy:

54 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
55 Governor concurring therein, expresses support for the development of a balanced national
56 immigration policy with the overarching purpose of protecting and preserving the safety and
57 interests of the United States and its citizens while recognizing the needs of Utah industries to
58 have a stable and legal supply of workers quickly available where there are no U.S. workers

59 otherwise available.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Utah's
61 congressional delegation to work with the United States Congress to ensure that any reform
62 efforts focus primarily on enabling Utah's employers to hire a legal workforce sufficient to
63 meet the needs of Utah industries to enhance the economic growth of the state's private sector.

64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Congress to
65 reform the current systems for obtaining work visas and reduce the delay for legal immigration.

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor express their
67 opposition to granting blanket amnesty to undocumented persons and urge that appropriate
68 sanctions be a part of any solution.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize that
70 addressing the status of millions of undocumented persons currently present in the U.S. is a
71 complex issue.

72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge that in
73 passing immigration reform Congress not inadvertently create unnecessary hurdles and lengthy
74 delays for those who wish to legally hire non-U.S. workers.

75 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge that in
76 passing immigration reform Congress not inadvertently create incentives for additional illegal
77 immigration by creating unnecessary hurdles and lengthy delays for those who wish to
78 immigrate legally for work or citizenship.

79 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Congress to
80 reform the Foreign Worker Visa system as part of any immigration reform.

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Congress to
82 eliminate current visa backlogs and prevent future backlogs to help meet Utah workforce
83 demands.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recommend that
85 these tasks can be accomplished by:

86 (1) dramatically increasing the annual immigrant visa caps, including the limits on
87 H-1B and H-2B visas, particularly in the industries requiring highly trained and educated
88 workers and seasonal hospitality operations;

89 (2) streamlining the processing of H-2A visas to create a more workable system to

90 enable agricultural employers to hire needed foreign workers for seasonal jobs;

91 (3) maintaining the L-1 visa program; and

92 (4) expediting work authorization for foreign nationals who complete University-level
93 degrees in U.S. institutions to ensure that the benefits of the educational investment the nation
94 has made in these individuals remains in the U.S.

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Congress to
96 ensure the enforcement of current federal employer sanctions for knowingly hiring
97 undocumented labor, which requires the federal government to adopt a secure, reliable, and fast
98 employment verification system accessible to employers electronically 24 hours a day.

99 **§→** [~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge that all~~
100 ~~components of Utah state government work to ensure that any efforts to effect immigration~~
101 ~~laws or laws related to Utah's workforce that impact immigration be deferred until Congress~~
102 ~~passes immigration reform pursuant to the principles stated in this resolution.] **←§**~~

103 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the Majority
104 Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
105 the United States Department of Homeland Security, and to the members of Utah's
106 congressional delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-25-08 3:53 PM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

Fiscal Note

**S.C.R. 5 - Concurrent Resolution Calling for Congress to Pass Balanced
Immigration Reform**

2008 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
