

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; and
- 26 ▶ recognizes that addressing the status of millions of undocumented persons currently
- 27 present in the U.S. is a complex issue.

28 **Special Clauses:**

29 None

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge Utah's

58 congressional delegation to work with the United States Congress to ensure that any reform
59 efforts focus primarily on enabling Utah's employers to hire a legal workforce sufficient to meet
60 the needs of Utah industries to enhance the economic growth of the state's private sector.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

86 (2) streamlining the processing of H-2A visas to create a more workable system to
87 enable agricultural employers to hire needed foreign workers for seasonal jobs;

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

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

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

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