

PUBLIC STATEMENT

IEEE-USA Endorses H.R.5327 RELIEF Act to Eliminate Immigration Backlog and Increase American Business Competitiveness

WASHINGTON (10 December 2019) – On Friday, U.S. Representative Donna Shalala (D-Fla.) announced she has introduced legislation to resolve one of the biggest problems currently facing our immigration system: inadequate amounts of green cards available for high-skill immigrants.

[H.R.5327](#) is the House companion to [S.2603, the Resolving Extended Limbo for Immigrant Employees and Families \(RELIEF\) Act](#) introduced by Senator Durbin in October. The RELIEF Act would eliminate the employment-based green card backlog within five years by increasing the number of available green cards. Nearly four million future Americans are on the State Department’s immigrant visa waiting list, in addition to hundreds of thousands of high-skilled immigrants already in the U.S. who are also waiting for green cards – in some cases, for a decade or more. IEEE-USA strongly supports this legislation and appreciates Congresswoman Shalala’s leadership in the House.

The RELIEF Act would modernize outdated policies and benefit American businesses by attracting the world’s best talent to the U.S. And because the immigrants impacted by this policy already have jobs here, no American jobs would be affected. Since immigrants with advanced engineering degrees are among the most entrepreneurial in the world, the RELIEF Act will help create jobs by allowing immigrants to start new companies in the United States and hire more workers – something they can’t do until they have a green card.

“Skilled immigrants to this country face such a long wait to get a green card that we risk some of these individuals giving up and taking their talent to other countries,” said Thomas Coughlin, president of IEEE-USA. “The RELIEF Act is a plan that helps everyone – skilled immigrants, American businesses, and the American public most of all.”

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IEEE-USA serves the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of nearly 180,000 engineering, computing and technology professionals who are U.S. members of IEEE, the world's largest technical professional organization.

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