

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 24

Introduced by Assembly Member Chu

June 25, 2015

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24—Relative to visas for highly-skilled nationals of the Republic of Korea.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 24, as introduced, Chu. Visas for highly-skilled nationals of the Republic of Korea.

This measure would urge Congress to support legislation that would provide visas for 15,000 highly-skilled nationals of the Republic of Korea to make valuable contributions to the United States economy.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Last year marked the 60th anniversary of the
2 founding of our alliance with Korea, and the United States
3 continues to enjoy a strong and enduring relationship with Korea;
4 and
5 WHEREAS, Authorization for 15,000 Korean professional visas
6 annually would further the goals of the Free Trade Agreement
7 (FTA) and reflect the strong bilateral relationship between Korea
8 and the United States; and
9 WHEREAS, Failure to take advantage of the opportunities
10 presented by not increasing the amount of visas for highly-skilled
11 Korean workers could unnecessarily limit the positive trend in
12 service trade and investment growth witnessed since the FTA was
13 implemented; and

1 WHEREAS, There is a shortage of workers in the science,
2 technology, engineering and mathematics fields (STEM), and
3 Korean professionals, including students in United States
4 universities, are excellent candidates for unfilled STEM jobs; and

5 WHEREAS, The United States is expected to have more than
6 8.6 million STEM-related job openings by 2018 and as many as
7 3 million of those jobs might be unfilled; and

8 WHEREAS, Visas for 15,000 Korean professionals will help
9 ensure that the United States continues to attract and retain the
10 best and the brightest workforce; and

11 WHEREAS, Highly-skilled Korean professionals provide
12 valuable contributions to the United States economy in many key
13 sectors, including engineering, technology, accounting, health
14 care, financial services, and higher education. When highly-skilled
15 Korean professionals work in the United States, productivity,
16 competitiveness, and exports increase; and

17 WHEREAS, Upon completing school, most Korean graduates
18 cannot work in the United States. Instead of helping to grow the
19 United States economy and filling vital skills gaps for American
20 employers, these Korean graduates take their skills and
21 entrepreneurialism elsewhere; and

22 WHEREAS, Korean students at America's colleges and
23 universities are in an ideal position to be at the forefront of the
24 advancement in innovative ideas. Combined with the closeness
25 brought about by the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement
26 and the long-standing alliance, highly-skilled Korean professionals
27 would have a unique opportunity to create jobs and contribute to
28 the United States economy; and

29 WHEREAS, In the 114th United States Congress, legislation is
30 pending that would provide visas for up to 15,000 highly-skilled
31 nationals of the Republic of Korea each fiscal year solely to
32 perform services in a specialty occupation in the United States;
33 now, therefore, be it

34 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
35 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature urges Congress to support
36 legislation that would provide visas for 15,000 highly-skilled
37 nationals of the Republic of Korea to make valuable contributions
38 to the United States economy; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
40 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United

- 1 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
- 2 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
- 3 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
- 4 States.

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