

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9023

To encourage the growth of America’s STEM pool.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 11, 2024

Mr. THANEDAR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To encourage the growth of America’s STEM pool.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Keep STEM Grad-
5 uates in America Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that foreign stu-
8 dents pursuing degrees in science and technology fields at
9 colleges and universities in the United States contribute
10 significantly to American innovation and economic growth.

11 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to encour-
12 age talented foreign students studying science and tech-

1 nology in the United States to remain in the country after
2 graduation by extending the optional practical training pe-
3 riod, allocating additional H-1B visa quotas, and enhanc-
4 ing their chances of securing H-1B visas.

5 **SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF OPT PERIOD.**

6 (a) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after
7 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
8 Homeland Security shall revise section 214.2(f)(10) of
9 title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, to—

10 (1) extend the maximum period of science, tech-
11 nology, engineering, or mathematics (hereinafter
12 known as “STEM”) optional practical training
13 (hereinafter known as “OPT”) from 29 months to
14 48 months for an eligible student; and

15 (2) extend the period for which an eligible stu-
16 dent may apply for OPT from 60 days to 180 days.

17 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for the extended
18 OPT period under subsection (a), an applicant must have
19 earned a degree in a STEM field from a institution of
20 higher education in the United States that is accredited.

21 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 (1) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term “eligible
23 student” means any student who has earned one or
24 more degrees in a STEM field.

1 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
2 term “institution of higher education” has the
3 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
4 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

5 **SEC. 4. ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL H-1B VISAS.**

6 Section 214(g) of the Immigration and Nationality
7 Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(g)(1)) is amended by adding at the
8 end the following:

9 “(12) The numerical limitation described in
10 paragraph (1)(A) for a fiscal year shall be increased
11 from 20,000 visas to 30,000 visas for non-
12 immigrants with a degree in a science, technology,
13 engineering, or mathematics (commonly known as
14 ‘STEM’) field from an institution of higher edu-
15 cation in the United States.”.

16 **SEC. 5. REVISION TO H-1B LOTTERY SYSTEM.**

17 Not later than 270 days after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall
19 revise any rules and regulations necessary to prioritize
20 registrants in the H-1B registration selection process that
21 are nonimmigrants with a degree in a science, technology,
22 engineering, or mathematics (commonly known as
23 “STEM”).

1 **SEC. 6. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**

2 Not later than one year after the date of enactment
3 of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the
4 Secretary of State shall submit a report to Congress as-
5 sessing the impact of this Act on the retention of non-
6 immigrants with a degree in a science, technology, engi-
7 neering, or mathematics (commonly known as “STEM”)
8 field from an institution of higher education (as such term
9 is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
10 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

11 **SEC. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

12 Unless otherwise specified under this Act, this Act,
13 and any amendments made by this Act, shall take effect
14 90 days after the date of enactment.

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