



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 3, 2015

Obama Administration Gives Almost One Million Work Permits to Illegals

During the first six years of the Obama administration — from 2009 to 2014 — the U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued 982,000 new work permits to illegal aliens or aliens unqualified for admission, with 957,000 going to aliens who crossed the border illegally.

USCIS issued 5,461,568 new work permits to immigrants during the same period, in addition to the 1.1 million legal immigrants and 700,000 guest workers admitted to the United States each year.



These statistics were obtained from USCIS in a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request submitted by The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), a Washington-based non-profit organization that advocates shrinking the illegal immigrant population through consistent enforcement of our immigration laws.

Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies for CIS, issued the following statement on February 2:

I was astonished at the huge number of work permits that are being issued by the Obama administration outside the legal immigration system through executive discretion, especially at a time of high unemployment and stagnant wages. Besides the effect on the American worker, it encourages and rewards more illegal immigration.

In response to the CIS report, Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), who is chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, and an outspoken critic of the Obama administration's immigration policies, posted a statement on his Senate website on February 2 observing: "This drastic expansion of foreign workers, which includes many illegal workers, undermines jobs and incomes for all residents, including recent immigrants."

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Sessions expanded on his statement:

This Freedom of Information Act request has unearthed the operation of a shadow immigration system previously unknown to the American public. A full investigation is warranted. In addition to the widespread non-enforcement of existing immigration law — such as the public charge rule — we know now the Administration has been issuing millions of additional work permits beyond what Congress has authorized. Since 2009, the Administration has issued 5.5 million new work permits in excess of the regular immigration flow. This massive increase in the labor supply has occurred simultaneously with a steep drop in family incomes and a sharp rise in the number of Americans pushed out of the workforce. All jobs gains since the recession have gone to foreign workers, while the slack labor market has depressed median family incomes almost \$5,000 in that time.

Sessions noted that the exposé released by CIS came as the Senate was preparing to vote February 3 on



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whether to begin debate on the “House-passed bill” (H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015), which would “stop the President’s unlawful issuance of another 5 million work permits to illegal immigrants.” The House passed H.R. 240 on January 14 by a vote of 236-191. It was introduced in the Senate as S. 272 on January 27 by Jeanne Shaheen (R-N.H.).

Sessions stated that H.R. 240 “fully funds every lawful activity of DHS; what it does not fund is outlaw behavior.” The Alabama senator also admonished his colleagues not to attempt to stop debate on the bill, asserting that any senator who “votes to block debate is voting to deny their constituents the protections of their own laws.”

The Obama administration signaled its intentions to continue its policy of granting work permits to illegal immigrants last October, when USCIS posted a notice on the FedBizOpps.Gov (Federal Business Opportunities) website announcing the imminent solicitation for card stock to be used to print a number of Permanent Resident Cards and Employment Authorization Documentation cards far in excess of what might be needed for immigrants who came here legally.

The Employment Authorization Documentation card (EAD, Form I-765), known popularly as a “work permit,” is a document issued by USCIS that provides its holder with a legal right to work in the United States. Britain’s *Daily Mail*, in an article last October 20, cited figures from USCIS saying the agency processed 862,000 EADs overall between January and June of 2014.

This caused those concerned about how many work permits and green cards the Obama administration might issue through its executive actions to wonder why USCIS would need 34,000,000 cards over the next five years — 6,800,000 annually — starting with an initial order of 4,000,000.

Among these was Jessica Vaughan, who wrote at the time that the government’s massive card stock order “seems to indicate that the president is contemplating an enormous executive action that is even more expansive than the plan that Congress rejected in the ‘Gang of Eight’ bill.”

These concerns were legitimized by the fact that USCIS’s card request specifically explained that the large increase was related to potential changes in immigration policy. “The Contractor shall demonstrate the capability to support potential ‘surge’ in PRC and EAD card demand for up to 9M cards during the initial period of performance to support possible future immigration reform initiative requirements,” the document said.

An indication that the Obama administration was going forward with its plan following its executive actions announced in November came quickly. Leon Rodriguez, the director of USCIS, told Spanish-speaking reporters during a conference call in December that “undocumented” (illegal) immigrants should be able to start applying for deferred action granting them protection from deportation and work permits in February and May.

A notice posted on the USCIS website states: “U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will expand Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals on Feb. 18, 2015. That will be the first day to request DACA under the revised guidelines as part of President Obama’s recent announcements on immigration.”

Another notice on the USCIS website states that an initiative authorized by the Obama executive action will allow “parents of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to request deferred action and employment authorization for three years, in a new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents program.”



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Despite the concerns voiced by Senator Sessions and others that the massive increase in work authorization permits for both legal and illegal immigrants has negatively impacted our job market, the Obama administration's march toward increasing those numbers is moving ahead.

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