



October 11, 2007

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
FAX: 202.225.7680

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
FAX: 202.225.7682

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chairwoman
Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees,
Border Security, and International Law
Subcommittee
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
FAX: 202.225.3737

The Honorable Steve King
Ranking Member
Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees
Border Security, and International Law
Subcommittee
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
FAX: 202.225.3737

Dear Chairman Conyers, Ranking Member Smith, Chairman Lofgren, and Ranking Member King;

While the Senate was unable to pass a comprehensive immigration package, it is critical that we address the problems created by our current outdated policies regarding highly skilled immigration. Given the difficult political issues surrounding changes to immigration policy, it is all the more important for parties with different viewpoints to come together and seek common understanding.

With this in mind, the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers – United States of America (IEEE-USA) are writing to share with you our areas of agreement with regard to immigration policy. Media stories often highlight our organizations' different positions on the H-1B program, and completely overlook the reform proposals that we both support. Both IEEE-USA and SIA see the retention of highly educated immigrants as part of a broader competitiveness and innovation initiative that includes a doubling of Federal investment in research in the physical sciences, improvements in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education at the K-12 and undergraduate levels and enactment of a permanent and strengthened R&D tax credit.

Electrical and electronics engineers design the complex circuits that are embodied in silicon chips, and represent about half of the semiconductor industry's engineering workforce. The success of the \$114 billion U.S. semiconductor industry – America's second leading

manufacturing exporter -- rests on the efforts of its electrical and electronics engineers to develop innovative products that are better than the competition's.

Currently 51 percent of master's and 71 percent of Ph.D. graduates in electrical and electronic engineering from U.S. universities are foreign nationals. The SIA and IEEE-USA agree that these highly-talented individuals should be able to get permanent resident status (green cards) in an expedited manner, rather than having to wait from 5-10 years as many do under the current system. SIA and IEEE-USA support legislation to attract and retain foreign professionals with advanced degrees in STEM fields as legal permanent residents. The U.S. should be encouraging highly skilled talent to enter and remain in the United States in order to improve America's competitive position in the global economy. Other nations are working hard to attract this same talent to compete against U.S. companies.

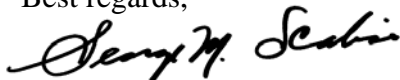
SIA and IEEE-USA both support legislation that will strengthen America's high tech workforce by:

- Raising the employment-based immigrant visa cap, including an exemption for foreign professionals with advanced degrees in STEM fields from U.S. universities
- Creating a new foreign student visa category to allow U.S. STEM bachelor's or higher degree holders who have a job offer to transition directly from student visas to green cards
- Extending post curricular optional practical training for foreign students from 12 months to 24 months to allow them to go more easily from temporary to permanent resident status.
- Exempting the spouse and children of certain employment-based professionals from the employment-based immigrant visa cap

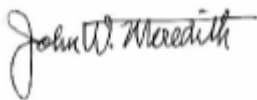
While both SIA and IEEE-USA believe there is value in providing you with our areas of agreement, it should be noted that both organizations continue to have broader positions that include elements in which we are not aligned.

We urge you to take action this year to reform U.S. immigration law with regard to highly educated individuals, and as part of these changes encourage you to include the elements that are supported by the SIA and IEEE-USA.

Best regards,



George Scalise
President, Semiconductor Industry Association



John W. Meredith, P.E.
President, IEEE-USA