

14 May 2008

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
102 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Employment-Based Immigration Reform Bills

Dear Representative Lofgren:

IEEE-USA strongly supports and will work to promote prompt enactment of the 3 employment-based immigration reform bills that you introduced in April and May of this year.

Upon completion of their graduate education programs, many talented foreign nationals who earn advanced degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields at U.S. schools often have to wait six or more years before they can qualify for legal permanent residence in the United States. By exempting such individuals from current employment-based immigrant admissions ceilings, **H.R. 6039** will facilitate their transition from temporary (non-immigrant) student status to legal permanent resident status and eventually to full United States citizenship.

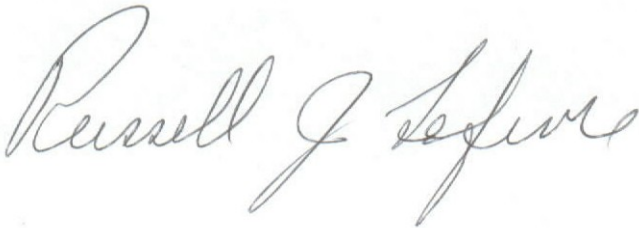
Under current law, applicants for employment-based immigrant admissions from high demand countries, such as India and China, often have to wait seven to ten years or more for their immigrant visa petitions to be adjudicated. **H.R. 5921** will put an end to such interminable delays for skilled foreign professionals, including engineers and scientists by eliminating these unduly restrictive per country limits on employment-based immigration.

And finally, **H.R. 5882** will help to reduce visa backlogs and processing delays in immigrant admissions by “recapturing” unused employment-based visas from prior years (1992-2007) and making them available for immediate use by petitioners who currently meet all statutory requirements for admission as legal permanent residents.

If enacted, these three simple immigrant admissions reform proposals will enhance U.S. technological competitiveness, help to shift the focus of the high skills immigration reform debate away from calls to expand the controversial H-1B temporary (non-immigrant) work visa program and set the stage for more long-overdue improvements in the nation’s permanent, employment-based immigration system.

IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the professional careers and public policy interests of more than 215,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 370,000 members in 160 countries. More information is available on line at <http://www.ieeeusa.org> and from Vin O'Neill at (202) 530-8327 or v.oneill@ieee.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Russell J. Lefevre". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Russell J. Lefevre, Ph.D.
President, IEEE-USA

RJL/von