

HB 1889 would encourage more illegal immigration and take away jobs from Americans

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Key Findings

1. **House Bill 1889 would encourage illegal, unsafe immigration into Washington state.**
2. **The bill would take jobs away from American citizens.**
3. **There is a legal path for those looking to work and live in the United States through the visa and green card programs.**
4. **House Bill 1889 would introduce conflicts with Federal Immigration Statutes.**

Introduction

House Bill 1889 (HB 1889)¹, introduced by Representative Amy Walen (D-48), would create more incentives for individuals who are planning to enter the United States illegally by removing citizenship and immigration status as preconditions to obtain job licenses. It would also, for those here already illegally, remove restrictions on their ability to obtain professional and commercial licenses and undercut legitimate business owners in good conscience trying to do what's right by following the rules.

The professional licenses HB 1889 would allow are dispensing opticians, midwives, massage therapists, dental hygienists, social workers, nursing assistants, sex offender treatment providers, emergency medical technicians, chiropractors, dentists, nursing home administrators, osteopathic physicians and surgeons, pharmacists, nurses among many others.

U.S. immigration law requires a work visa, permanent resident alien card (green card) or American citizenship in order to work and live in the United States legally. The purpose of these laws is primarily public safety, so the government can accurately identify who has entered the country, that they are respecting our laws and to ensure that the nation's immigration system is working as designed.

HB 1899 would make it more enticing for citizens of other countries to make the dangerous journey across the southern border and enter the United States illegally. It would also encourage visa overstays.

The immigration process can be difficult, but Washington state should not be unilaterally defying federal immigration law by issuing certification and encouraging illegal immigration.

The Washington Policy Center strongly supports democratically enacted laws and the legal path for immigration. The United States has been very generous with its immigration policy and allows many thousands of qualified workers to enter the country legally with the appropriate work permits and visas. Legal immigrants are often on the way to becoming new Americans, hardworking citizens of their adopted country who work hard and play by the rules.

Conclusion

Lawmakers encouraging illegal immigration do a disservice to those who pursue a legal entry, either temporarily or permanently, into the United States.

1 House Bill 1889 — "Allowing persons to receive professional licenses and certifications regardless of immigration or citizenship status." <https://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?BillNumber=1889&Year=2023&Initiative=false>

*Mark Harmsworth is the
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