



Bill Analysis: Securing America's Future Act

Representative Bob Goodlatte (R- Virginia) and five original [co-sponsors](#) introduced the Securing America's Future Act, [H.R. 4670](#), on January 10, 2018. The [wide-ranging, over 400-page bill](#) would dramatically transform our immigration system by reducing legal immigration by 25 percent, criminalizing illegal presence in the U.S., increasing border security and interior immigration enforcement, revising the agricultural guest worker program, and mandating E-verify for all employers among other provisions. It would provide some Dreamers a three-year renewable nonimmigrant legal status.

Fails to provide Dreamers a permanent solution. The bill would create a three-year renewable legal status available only to DACA recipients who had a valid work authorization at the date of the bill's enactment. Hundreds of thousands of Dreamers would be left out, including those who lost their DACA protection after the program was rescinded on September 5, 2017, were too young or too old to apply for DACA, and did not apply because they were fearful of applying. Each DACA recipient [contributes](#) an estimated \$109,000 to the economy each year. If all DACA recipients were deported, America's annual GDP would fall by nearly \$42 billion.

Harms the economy by significantly cutting legal immigration. The bill would eliminate the ability of citizens to sponsor parents, adult children, brothers and sisters to immigrate to America and would only allow them to sponsor spouses and minor children. It would also eliminate the diversity visa program. Although the bill would increase visas for skilled workers (EB 1, 2, 3) by 55,000, these additional visas would not offset the 315,000 reduction in family and diversity visas. Reducing legal immigration to the U.S. would have a [negative impact](#) on economic growth and would likely make it harder for a number of industries to find employees.

Imposes E-Verify on all employers and employees. The bill would mandate that all employers use the federal government's E-Verify national identification system that checks against its records whether an employee is authorized to work. It would significantly increase penalties for employers who are found to have employed undocumented workers. While E-Verify error rates have dropped significantly, if mandated for all employers we estimate 200,000 people who are hired for jobs would be erroneously found to be ineligible to work.

Creates a new visa for temporary agricultural workers. The bill would replace the existing H-2A temporary visa program, which provides temporary visas for seasonal agricultural labor with a new H-C visa program that would provide up to 500,000 visas and allow certain industries that need year-round labor to participate.

Creates overly harsh penalties by criminalizing unlawful presence. The bill (section 2206) would criminalize millions of individuals who are knowingly unauthorized to be in the U.S. for over 90 days. Even if a person has not violated any criminal or civil laws that lead to their unlawful presence, they would be subject to fines and potential incarceration ranging from 6 months for a first-time offender to up to 20 years.

Restricts a law enforcement agency's ability to have community trust policies. The bill would restrict jurisdictions from having policies that restrict officers from inquiring about the immigration or citizenship status of individuals. States or localities found to be in violation of these provisions could lose federal grants relating to law enforcement or immigration. If enacted, these provisions approach could have devastating effects on community trust, as immigrant victims and witnesses might be less inclined to cooperate with state and local law enforcement.

Increases expensive border security measures. The bill requires the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to hire an additional 5,000 Border Patrol agents. The number of Border Patrol agents [nearly doubled](#) between FY 2002 and FY 2017 (increasing from 10,045 to 19,437), but the average number of apprehensions per month for each Border Patrol agent is currently less than two. It also directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to construct and deploy the necessary physical barriers and technology to prevent all unlawful entries. The cost of building a wall along all 2,000 miles of the southern border is [expected to range](#) from \$21.6 billion to \$31.2 billion, not including the cost of maintaining the wall and other physical barriers over the years.

Diminishes humanitarian protections. The bill would restrict eligibility and make it more difficult for those seeking asylum in the U.S. to apply. Also, it would lessen protections for unaccompanied minor children such as subjecting more of them to expedited immigration processing. It would require the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to try to determine the immigration status of an individual in whose care an unaccompanied child would be placed and require DHS to pursue deportation proceedings if the individual is undocumented.