



The ENLIST ACT Supports Military Readiness

Our nation has allowed non-citizens to serve in our Armed Forces since the Revolutionary War. The **Encourage New Legalized Immigrants to Start Training (ENLIST) Act**, [H.R. 60](#), is a widely supported bipartisan bill that would grant lawful permanent resident status to undocumented immigrants who were brought to America as children and enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces.

What Would the ENLIST Act Do?

- The bill would allow non-citizens who were unlawfully present in the country to become lawful permanent residents (LPRs) after they enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- In order to qualify and gain for LPR status, individuals would need to:
 - Have been unlawfully present and continuously in the U.S. since Dec. 31, 2012;
 - Have initially entered the U.S. at the age of 15 or younger; and
 - Meet eligibility requirements and be selected to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Individuals would automatically lose their LPR status if they are dismissed for “Other Than Honorable Conditions Discharge” before they complete their term of enlistment.

Why We Support the ENLIST Act

- **The ENLIST Act supports our nation’s military readiness.** Increasing the pool of potential recruits is critical to supporting our national security. The U.S. military faces a recruitment challenge in the years ahead, even with the reduced size of the armed forces following the withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan. Providing an opportunity for undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as young children, grew up in our communities, and desire to serve and protect the country could help solve this issue.
- **The ENLIST Act is a bipartisan legislative effort.** Representative Jeff Denham (R - California) introduced the ENLIST Act ([H.R. 60](#)) in the House with 29 original Democrats and Republicans as [co-sponsors](#). The bill has [numerous](#) co-sponsors from both parties.
- **The ENLIST Act has precedent in past policies.** At the turn of the twentieth century, immigrants who could speak English and who declared their intent to become a naturalized citizen were enlisted and made up 12% to 15% of the Army. During World War I, the government drafted nearly a half million immigrants, creating a force that was 18% non-citizens. It was not until 1961 that Congress added a requirement that noncitizens must be lawful permanent residents in order to enlist in the military in times of peace.
- **The ENLIST Act is a good first step.** This proposal is only one piece of a much larger puzzle. Our current immigration system no longer adequately addresses our country’s economic and national security realities. Our immigration system needs to include effective border security, earned legalized status for qualifying undocumented immigrants, reforms to our existing visa system and interior immigration enforcement that both deters illegal immigration and increases public safety.