



## Temporary Family Visitation Act

### Background

The Temporary Family Visitation Act (TFVA) would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to establish a separate nonimmigrant classification under B visa category for family members of US citizens and permanent residents. While facilitating family reunion is one of the main pillars of the US immigration policy, the current immigration law lacks a direct path for relatives of US citizens or permanent residents to *temporarily visit for family purposes*. The proposed legislation if enacted could facilitate family reunions and strengthen our economy, while ensuring that visits would be temporary and enforceable.

Currently, family members of US citizens and permanent residents apply to visit their relatives through B2 visas, a category designated for aliens visiting for *pleasure*. The US policy in regard to B2 visitor visas lacks consideration for family reunion resulting in: (1) an enormous mixed pool of *high* and *low* national security risk applicants, respectively visitors for pleasure and relative visitors, that is difficult and significantly timely to process through; with (2) an unnecessary high denial rate of family member visitors; which (3) pushes many to apply for immigrant visas as the only path to visit their relatives in the US.

The Temporary Family Visitation Act would create limited change within the Immigration and Nationality Act by supporting the principle of family reunion while strengthening the economy and reducing unintended immigrant visa applications. TFVA also helps alleviate national security concerns by creating a pool of lower risk applicants with certain and bona fide ties to the US.

It would establish a new B-3 nonimmigrant category allowing US citizens and permanent residents to petition for their family members for temporary visits. The application requires that the petitioner sign a letter of financial support, the applicant or petitioner post a bond, and the applicant purchase travel medical insurance for the duration of stay. The requirements ensure that the applicants make specific plans for their visit, provide financial assurances to the US government, and dissuade visa overstays by incentivizing and engaging the petitioner in the process of the application.

The US Travel Association estimates that each overseas traveler spends approximately \$4,200 when visiting the US and stays on average 18 nights. In 2018, international travel spending directly supported about 1.2 million jobs and \$33.7 billion in wages. In 2016, all travel foreign visitors spent in estimated \$245 billion, resulting in a travel trade surplus of \$84 billion. Including this policy in the INA would potentially impact an estimated 500,000 to 1 million future applicants i.e. boosting the economy via indirect spending.

### Position

**The Daytona Regional Chamber supports the proposed Temporary Family Visitation Act.**

**11/2019**