



Friday, June 8 2007

U.S. SENATE BILL ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM IS WITHDRAWN FROM FLOOR CONSIDERATION FOLLOWING TWO FAILED CLOTURE VOTES

Debate Has Ended for Now, and the Bill Will Not Receive a Floor Vote

As reported in previous Tindall & Foster Email Bulletins, there has recently been activity in connection with legislative efforts to achieve Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR). Recent Senate debates have revolved around proposed amendments to Senate Bill 1348, with the parties and opponents and proponents of immigration reform hashing out the details with various amendments concerning immigration benefits and enforcement.

In order to receive a “yes or no vote” on passage, the Senate required passage of a “cloture” vote which would effectively set a deadline for the termination of debate and the taking of a floor vote. Twice yesterday Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) called for a cloture vote, and each time cloture failed. Majority Leader Reid then withdrew the bill from consideration, leaving the public to guess as to when the bill, or any provisions of it, will be taken up again for debate, either as individual provisions or in terms of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for which Congress expresses theoretical support and the general public polls favorably.

Notably, the failure of cloture and the a floor vote in this large CIR bill may mean further delay in Congressional efforts to alleviate the H-1B shortage by providing for an increase in the H-1B quota for the present and upcoming fiscal years. The CIR bill had provided for additional H-1B numbers, but at the expense of a dramatic increase in H-1B filing fees to \$5,000 in government filing fees. While we are still hopeful that Congress will address the dire H-1B shortage, we recognize that any new H-1B numbers are likely to come with a corresponding increase in certain statutory H-1B government filing fees.

As always, Tindall & Foster, P.C. will continue to monitor legislative activity in connection with Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the potential for additional H-1B numbers, and will make clients aware of additional pertinent information via future Email Bulletins and on the Tindall & Foster web site at www.tindallfoster.com.