



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1294

Resolution calling on Congress to pass and the President to sign H.R. 5695, the Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2016

By Council Members Ulrich, Menchaca, Cabrera, Palma, Mendez and Chin

Whereas, Veterans made enormous sacrifices as a consequence of their desire to protect the safety of our people and the sanctity of our constitution; and

Whereas, In light of the fact that they put themselves in harm's way, they deserve extensive accommodations from cities, states, and the federal government; and

Whereas, According to the National Immigration Forum, there are more than 500,000 foreign-born veterans living in the United States, as well as 12,000 non-citizen active duty service members; and

Whereas, Statistics from United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) a component of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), show that that 110,000 members of the military have been naturalized since October of 2001; and

Whereas, Despite the substantial contributions that individuals born outside of the United States have made to the armed forces, an immigration law from the 1990s has contributed to a substantial number of deportations; and

Whereas, The Immigration and Nationality Technical Corrections Act of 1994 and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 expanded the list of more than 30 categories of offenses for which an individual can be deported, adding crimes such as forgeries and including offenses committed at any point in an individual's life; and

Whereas, As a consequence of this law, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), more

than 250 veterans from 34 countries have been deported; and

Whereas, The ACLU also found that 73 percent of the veterans did not have a lawyer to represent them in removal proceedings; and

Whereas, This problem has attracted attention at the federal level, and this past July, Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), alongside 18 other co-sponsors, introduced the Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2016; and

Whereas, This legislation would require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish a program that would permit eligible deported noncitizen veterans to enter the United States; and

Whereas, It would also allow eligible noncitizen veterans in the United States to change their status to that of a noncitizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence; and

Whereas, Finally, this legislation would cancel the removal of eligible noncitizen veterans, and enable them to adjust their legal status; and

Whereas, Veterans deserve every possible legal means of reversing or mitigating adverse legal consequences such as deportation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Congress to pass and the President to sign the Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2016

LS#9151
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MK