

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO GRANT REPRIEVE TO ILLEGAL WORKERS DEADLINE FOR VISAS WOULD BE EXTENDED

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Byline: SUZANNE GAMBOA, Associated Press

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Body

The **House** voted Monday to **extend** by four months the **deadline** for **illegal** immigrants to apply for **visas** while in the United States, but the Bush administration said it would support more time than that.

The Republican measure was approved 336-43 in an expedited vote. Many lawmakers were looking to the Senate to provide more time than the **House** measure.

Jeane Mamo, a White **House** spokeswoman, said President Bush favors "a longer period of time than the four months." Asked if he'd rather see a 12-month application period -- the length supported by **House** Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo. -- Mamo said only that the president is "open to good ideas."

An estimated 640,000 **illegal** immigrants were eligible under the Legal Immigration and Family Equity Act to apply for **visas** without leaving the country. The law took effect in December and expired April 30.

It applied to **illegal** immigrants who are spouses or relatives of U.S. citizens or legal residents, or are sponsored by their employers. They had to have been in the country on or before Dec. 21, 2000, to be eligible.

Without such a law, **illegal** immigrants typically are forced to return to their home countries to apply for U.S. residency, and they can be barred from returning to the United States for as long as a decade.

Kevin Rooney, acting commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, told Congress earlier this month that the agency favors six to 12 more months because the INS was slow to come up with regulations, which delayed the application process.

The four-month **bill** was **passed** after bypassing the committee process. Debate was limited to 40 minutes and the **bill** could not be amended.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, said the **House** proposal would create an "explosion" of work at the INS at a time when the agency will be dealing with other **visa** programs.

"The INS . . . is incapable of dealing with this in a four-month period," said Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., who is sponsoring Senate legislation for a one-year application period.

CHART:

HOW THEY VOTED

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO GRANT REPRIEVE TO ILLEGAL WORKERS DEADLINE FOR VISAS WOULD BE EXTENDED

Here's how Bay Area representatives voted Monday on a proposal to **extend** by four months the **deadline** for undocumented immigrants to apply for **visas** without having to leave the country.

YES:

- * Honda
- * Eshoo
- * Farr
- * Lee
- * Lofgren
- * Pelosi
- * Stark
- * Tauscher
- * Woolsey

NO:

none

NOT VOTING:

Lantos

Notes

The Los Angeles Times contributed to this report.

Graphic

Chart

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (93%); PASSPORTS & **VISAS** (90%); **ILLEGAL** IMMIGRANTS (90%); US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (90%); US REPUBLICAN PARTY (89%); LEGISLATION (89%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (89%); US DEMOCRATIC PARTY (89%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); POLITICAL PARTIES (78%); FOREIGN LABOR (78%); APPROVALS (77%); DISCRIMINATION LAW (68%)

Company: BAY AREA INSURANCE SERVICES (52%)

Organization: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (54%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (54%)

Person: CHUCK HAGEL (79%); SHEILA JACKSON-LEE (58%); GEORGE W BUSH (58%)

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO GRANT REPRIEVE TO ILLEGAL WORKERS DEADLINE FOR VISAS WOULD BE
EXTENDED

Geographic: NEBRASKA, USA (79%); TEXAS, USA (79%); UNITED STATES (94%)

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