

S 478

Higher Wages for American Workers Act of 2021

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Immigration

Introduced: Feb 25, 2021

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Feb 25, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/478>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Cotton, Tom [R-AR]

Party: Republican • **State:** AR • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (4 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Capito, Shelley Moore [R-WV]	R · WV		Feb 25, 2021
Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]	R · ME		Feb 25, 2021
Sen. Portman, Rob [R-OH]	R · OH		Feb 25, 2021
Sen. Romney, Mitt [R-UT]	R · UT		Feb 25, 2021

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Referred To	Feb 25, 2021

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Immigration

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Higher Wages for American Workers Act of 2021

This bill increases the federal minimum wage, permanently establishes the E-Verify system and requires its use, and contains other related provisions.

Specifically, the bill increases the minimum wage to \$10 per hour, phased in over three years (five years for businesses with fewer than 20 employees), up from \$7.25 per hour. The bill also phases in over three years an increase of the minimum wage for new employees less than 20 years old from \$4.25 to \$6 per hour, and increases the length of time an employee may be paid this lower minimum wage. Both minimum wages shall be adjusted for inflation every two years.

All employers shall use E-Verify to electronically verify the employment eligibility of new employees, with phased-in deadlines that generally require all employers to comply within 18 months of this bill's enactment. This bill provides for various requirements related to E-Verify, including requiring employers to examine and verify certain identifying documents belonging to the employee.

The bill increases civil penalties for various violations related to hiring, recruiting, and referring ineligible employees. Repeated violators may be debarred from receiving federal contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements. The bill also increases criminal fines for violators that engage in a pattern or practice of violations.

If a state does not provide the Department of Homeland Security access to that state's driver's license and identity card information for E-Verify purposes, that state (and its local government entities) shall be ineligible for certain grants related to public works and economic development.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 25, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
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