

S 747

Citizenship for Essential Workers Act

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Immigration

Introduced: Mar 15, 2021

Current Status: Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety. Hearings held

Latest Action: Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety. Hearings held. (May 12, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/747>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Padilla, Alex [D-CA]

Party: Democratic • **State:** CA • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (18 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA] | D · MA | | Mar 15, 2021 |
| Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT] | D · CT | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL] | D · IL | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Hickenlooper, John W. [D-CO] | D · CO | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA] | D · MA | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD] | D · MD | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI] | D · RI | | Apr 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT] | I · VT | | Apr 19, 2021 |
| Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Apr 19, 2021 |
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI] | D · WI | | May 11, 2021 |
| Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE] | D · DE | | May 12, 2021 |
| Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI] | D · HI | | May 13, 2021 |
| Sen. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM] | D · NM | | May 19, 2021 |
| Sen. Menendez, Robert [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Jun 7, 2021 |
| Sen. Smith, Tina [D-MN] | D · MN | | Jun 24, 2021 |
| Sen. Duckworth, Tammy [D-IL] | D · IL | | Jul 27, 2021 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|---------------------|---------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Judiciary Committee | Senate | Hearings By (subcommittee) | May 12, 2021 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Immigration

Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|-------------|----------------|--|
| 117 HR 5517 | Related bill | Nov 1, 2022: Referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship. |
| 117 S 2954 | Related bill | Oct 7, 2021: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S7001) |
| 117 HR 1909 | Identical bill | May 18, 2021: Referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship. |

Summary (as of Mar 15, 2021)

Citizenship for Essential Workers Act

This bill establishes a mechanism for eligible aliens who worked as essential workers during the declared COVID-19 (i.e., coronavirus disease 2019) public health emergency to apply for and obtain permanent resident status. The bill also narrows certain grounds for deportability and inadmissibility.

To be eligible for permanent resident status under this bill, an alien must have earned income at any point during the COVID-19 emergency period doing work deemed essential by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or a state or local government. An alien may also be eligible if that alien is a parent, spouse, or child of (1) an eligible alien who died from COVID-19, or (2) a member of the Armed Forces. Certain aliens shall be ineligible, such as an alien who was a refugee on January 1, 2021.

To obtain permanent resident status under this bill, an applying alien must satisfy additional requirements, including by passing a background check.

Furthermore, the bill repeals provisions providing for three-year bars and permanent bars to admission into the United States. (Generally, these bars apply to aliens who were previously removed or unlawfully present in the United States.)

The bill also narrows the scope of certain crime-based grounds for inadmissibility or deportability, such as by redefining the term *conviction* to exclude expunged convictions.

The Department of Justice or DHS may waive certain grounds of inadmissibility or deportability (1) for humanitarian purposes, (2) to ensure family unity, or (3) for the public interest.

Actions Timeline

- **May 12, 2021:** Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and Border Safety. Hearings held.
- **Mar 15, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 15, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.