

S 1187

Fairness to Freedom Act of 2023

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Immigration

Introduced: Apr 18, 2023

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

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Apr 18, 2023)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/1187>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]

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

Cosponsors (7 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA]	D · MA		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR]	D · OR		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Padilla, Alex [D-CA]	D · CA		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]	I · VT		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]	D · MA		Apr 18, 2023
Sen. Butler, Laphonza R. [D-CA]	D · CA		Feb 5, 2024

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Referred To	Apr 18, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Immigration

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 HR 2697	Related bill	Apr 18, 2023: Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Fairness to Freedom Act of 2023

This bill establishes a right to legal representation in certain immigration proceedings (e.g., removal and immigration bond hearings) at the government's expense for individuals who cannot afford representation. The bill also establishes various entities to facilitate such legal representation.

Currently, individuals in these immigration proceedings may be represented by counsel but not at government expense.

The bill addresses various issues related to such legal representation, including (1) the scope of the representation, (2) criteria for determining whether the individual is financially unable to afford representation, and (3) requirements relating to allowing the individual to meet with their lawyer and receiving relevant documents. Immigration proceedings may not commence until counsel has been appointed.

The bill also establishes the Office of Immigration Representation to ensure that qualified individuals who cannot afford legal representation receive the representation as required by this bill. The office's duties shall include establishing (1) administrative regions throughout the United States, and (2) a local immigration representation board for each region.

The local boards must, subject to the office's approval, develop and implement plans for providing legal representation under this bill. To provide such legal representation, the local boards may (1) establish one or more immigrant public defender organizations, (2) contract with existing community defender organizations, and (3) establish a panel attorney system.

The bill establishes minimum funding requirements for the office.

Actions Timeline

- **Apr 18, 2023:** Introduced in Senate
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