

THE MERIT SYSTEM RESPONDS TO U.S. ECONOMIC NEEDS "Secure Borders, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Reform Act of 2007"

"A merit based system will be added to the family based immigration system, accounting for about a third of all future immigration. It will factor in preferences for both high skilled and low skilled workers, as well as extended family ties."

Encourages the immigration of workers of all skill levels. America needs workers of all skill levels to keep our economy thriving. The merit system provides this balance, rewarding those who:

- Work in professional, "specialty occupations" requiring particularized skills.
- Work in one of the 30 "high demand" occupations predicted to have the largest growth in the next decade, such as home health aides, maintenance and repair workers, carpenters, truck drivers, and teaching assistants.
- Work in critically-needed science, technology, engineering, math, or health fields.

Rewards those who have worked hard to benefit the American economy, as well as those who show great promise as workers. Points are granted for:

- Temporary Workers whose employers attest that they provide an integral skill for their businesses.
- Workers' years of employment with a U.S. company.
- Prospective immigrants who have a job offer from a U.S. employer.

Develops a highly-educated, well-trained workforce that is key to our competitiveness in the global economy. The merit system strongly rewards highly educated workers at the forefront of their fields. It also encourages lower-skilled workers to pursue educational opportunities, from a GED to a skilled trade. Workers receive points for a variety of educational accomplishments:

- An advanced degree, like an M.D. or Ph.D.
- A Bachelor's or Associates' degree.
- A high school diploma or GED.
- Completion of an apprenticeship program.
- Completion of a vocational education program.

Workers with high-sought post-secondary degrees in science, technology, engineering, math, or health occupations receive additional points.

Encourages Knowledge of English and Civics. English and basic civics knowledge helps immigrant workers to succeed in the American workforce and become integrated into our communities. The merit system rewards those who pursue these skills, providing points for both mastery of the language (demonstrated by a high score on the TOEFL test) or basic proficiency (demonstrated by passing the USCIC Citizenship Test in English and Civics).

Recognizes Family Connections. People who have families in this country are more likely to become active, contributing members of our society. The merit system recognizes the value of these connections, providing extra points for workers who have close family

legally residing in the U.S., once those workers have shown that they have job skills we need.