



SABA-DC PRAISES PASSAGE OF U.S. SENATE IMMIGRATION BILL

The South Asian Bar Association of Washington D.C. (SABA-DC) praises the United States Senate’s passage of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744) last week, the first step on the path to reforming our faulty immigration system. The Senate voted 68-32 to pass the bill, which provides a road to citizenship for the millions of undocumented immigrants in the United States and contemplates significant changes to the employment and family based immigration systems. However, SABA-DC is concerned about the bill’s proposed limitation of family-based immigration options for U.S. citizens to petition for their siblings and adult married children over the age of 30 and opposes provisions of the bill that may condone and facilitate profiling on the basis of religion or national origin. SABA-DC’s concerns stem from the impact that these measures would have upon the South Asian-American community.

SABA-DC however applauds the U.S. Senate in taking this important first step. In addition to creating a pathway to citizenship for many, the bill also seeks to clear family and employment backlogs, offers greater opportunities, protections and rights for workers, including H-1B workers and their spouses and workers recruited abroad, and provides protection for survivors of domestic violence, crimes, and trafficking. And while the bill does not specifically address the same-sex immigrant couples, based on the recent Supreme Court’s decision striking down the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services will accept family-based visa petitions filed by same sex couples.

The bill has moved on to be considered by the U.S. House of Representatives. We join our umbrella organization, the North American South Asian Bar Association (NASABA), in calling upon the House to take up the Senate legislation and schedule a vote on this important and historic bill.



The South Asian Bar Association of Washington, D.C. (“SABA-DC”) is a voluntary bar association dedicated to the needs, concerns, and interests of the South Asian American legal community in the Washington, D.C. area. SABA-DC’s key objectives are to advance the professional development of South Asian American lawyers and law students, provide a forum for professional and social networking, increase awareness and dialogue regarding legal issues concerning South Asian Americans, improve access to legal services for the South Asian American community, particularly among the least fortunate, and promote a greater understanding of the legal, political, economic, and cultural environment of South Asia. In pursuit of these objectives, SABA-DC regularly organizes panels, conferences, receptions, community outreach efforts, public service projects, mentoring programs, political awareness campaigns, networking events and a variety of other activities. For more information, visit www.sabadc.org