



Immigration Lobby Cries Over Visas ‘Lost Forever’

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In the midst of the persistent COVID pandemic and high jobless rates, immigration enthusiasts are pressing the Biden administration to approve more employment and family-based visas. Upset that 262,000 visas might go unallotted this year, they demand action.

The American Immigration Council (AIC) warns, “most of those additional visas ... could be lost forever unless Congress decides to make them available to current-day green card applicants.” Good luck with that, given Congress’ virtually inert condition.

In their alarm, AIC and allied groups such as the libertarian Cato Institute sound like little boys crying wolf.

In fact, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has gone into overdrive. Since Joe Biden took office, it had completed 732,000 citizenship naturalizations as of Aug. 13, putting the agency on a pace to reach pre-pandemic levels. Meantime, visa denial rates have declined sharply, from 28.6 percent last year to 7.1 percent this year.

The Biden administration also has lifted several coronavirus-related visa restrictions imposed by Donald Trump. Other measures taken by the administration include boosting refugee admissions, and scrapping public-charge rules that denied green cards to immigrants who might use Medicaid and taxpayer-funded services.

If employment-based visas fall short of pre-COVID levels this year, there are sound reasons for that. With 45.1 million working-age immigrants and native-born Americans unemployed, it is risible to argue that still more foreign workers are needed at this time.

Immigrants in the U.S. numbered a record 44.9 million in 2019, and that figure is still higher today, constituting roughly one of every seven persons in the country. But to the question of how many newcomers are enough, the answer from the immigration lobby is always simply “more.”

Pushing for evermore family-based visas amid already-high levels of immigration – including record flows of illegal aliens across the southern border – may be the most counterproductive position of all. Perpetuating a “reunification” (chain migration) policy that essentially enables earlier migrants to select future immigrants is not in any nation’s best interest.