

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8740

To provide temporary protected status and employment authorization to certain Iranian nationals adversely affected by the adjudication pause of December 2025, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 12, 2026

Ms. ANSARI (for herself and Mr. SUOZZI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## A BILL

To provide temporary protected status and employment authorization to certain Iranian nationals adversely affected by the adjudication pause of December 2025, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Iranian Temporary  
5 Immigration Relief Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Since early 2026, the United States has  
2       been engaged in armed hostilities with the Islamic  
3       Republic of Iran, including direct military strikes on  
4       Iranian territory, naval confrontations in the Persian  
5       Gulf, and sustained operations targeting Iranian  
6       military and nuclear infrastructure. These hostilities  
7       have resulted in significant civilian casualties, dis-  
8       placement of Iranian populations, and a severe dete-  
9       rioration of security conditions throughout the Is-  
10      lamic Republic of Iran.

11          (2) The state of conflict between the United  
12      States and Iran has created extraordinary and tem-  
13      porary conditions in Iran within the meaning of sec-  
14      tion 244(b)(1)(C) of the Immigration and Nation-  
15      ality Act (8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1)(C)), including but  
16      not limited to: destruction of civilian infrastructure;  
17      disruption of essential services including healthcare,  
18      transportation, and communications; economic insta-  
19      bility driven by internal mismanagement, conflict,  
20      and broader economic disruption; and a pervasive  
21      climate of danger to any individual perceived by the  
22      Iranian regime as having ties to the United States,  
23      such that Iranian nationals in the United States  
24      cannot safely return to Iran, and their return would  
25      pose a serious threat to their personal safety.

1           (3) Independent of and compounding the condi-  
2           tions created by the armed conflict, the Iranian re-  
3           gime has engaged in a campaign of widespread  
4           atrocities against its own civilian population, includ-  
5           ing massacres of civilians in January 2026 and the  
6           months following, mass arrests of political dissidents  
7           and perceived opponents, extrajudicial killings, en-  
8           forced disappearances, systematic use of torture in  
9           detention facilities, the violent suppression of public  
10          dissent, a near-total nationwide internet shutdown.  
11          These acts of state repression constitute additional  
12          extraordinary and temporary conditions within the  
13          meaning of section 244(b)(1)(C) of the Immigration  
14          and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1)(C)) and  
15          create a pervasive climate of danger to any indi-  
16          vidual perceived by the Iranian regime as having ties  
17          to the United States, opposition sympathies, or con-  
18          nections to the Iranian diaspora.

19          (4) The Government of the Islamic Republic of  
20          Iran is distinct from the Iranian people, many of  
21          whom oppose the regime and would face heightened  
22          risk of persecution if returned.

23          (5) In December 2025, U.S. Citizenship and  
24          Immigration Services implemented a pause on the  
25          adjudication of benefit applications filed by nationals

1 of Iran, in connection with national security con-  
2 cerns involving the Islamic Republic of Iran.

3 (6) The adjudication pause has caused signifi-  
4 cant and specific harm to Iranian nationals lawfully  
5 present in the United States who have pending ap-  
6 plications for change of nonimmigrant or immigrant  
7 status, extension of stay, or employment authoriza-  
8 tion that were filed in good faith and in compliance  
9 with applicable law.

10 (7) Certain Iranian nationals whose underlying  
11 immigration status may expire during the adjudica-  
12 tion pause are now in a state of legal limbo—their  
13 lawful presence depends solely on the continued  
14 pendency of applications that USCIS has paused to  
15 adjudicate, exposing them to potential accrual of un-  
16 lawful presence, removal proceedings, and inadmis-  
17 sibility consequences through no fault of their own.

18 (8) Certain Iranian nationals whose employ-  
19 ment authorization documents may expire during the  
20 adjudication pause, and whose timely filed renewal  
21 applications remain unadjudicated, are unable to  
22 lawfully work, causing severe financial hardship to  
23 them and their families.

24 (9) These individuals took all steps required by  
25 law to maintain their immigration status and work

1 authorization, and their current predicament is the  
2 direct result of government action rather than any  
3 failure on their part.

4 (10) Iranian nationals who have resided in the  
5 United States face a heightened and particularized  
6 risk of persecution, detention, interrogation, or vio-  
7 lence at the hands of the Iranian government and its  
8 affiliated security forces upon return to Iran, based  
9 on their perceived association with the United  
10 States, their exposure to Western society, and the  
11 Iranian regime's documented pattern of retaliating  
12 against individuals with American connections dur-  
13 ing periods of bilateral hostility.

14 (11) Many of the Iranian nationals affected by  
15 the adjudication pause have, in the months pre-  
16 ceding and following the onset of hostilities, actively  
17 and publicly participated in pro-democracy dem-  
18 onstrations against the Islamic Republic of Iran  
19 within the United States, and have engaged in on-  
20 line advocacy campaigns—including on social media  
21 platforms widely monitored by Iranian intelligence  
22 services—in support of the Iranian people's aspira-  
23 tions for freedom, human rights, and democratic  
24 governance. These individuals face a particularly  
25 acute and well-documented risk of persecution, im-

1       prisonment, torture, or execution by the Iranian re-  
2       gime should they be compelled to return to Iran, as  
3       the regime has a systematic and well-documented  
4       practice of identifying, tracking, and retaliating  
5       against diaspora activists and their family members  
6       inside Iran.

7               (12) Among the Iranian nationals adversely af-  
8       fected by the adjudication pause are engineers, phy-  
9       sicians, biomedical researchers, technology entre-  
10      preneurs, academic scientists, and other highly  
11      skilled professionals who have made substantial con-  
12      tributions to the United States economy, to Amer-  
13      ican innovation and competitiveness, and to sectors  
14      of critical national importance including healthcare,  
15      artificial intelligence, technology, and advanced man-  
16      ufacturing. The United States has historically bene-  
17      fitted enormously from the talents of Iranian-born  
18      professionals—who are among the most highly edu-  
19      cated immigrant populations in the country—and  
20      the loss of their labor, expertise, and entrepreneurial  
21      activity due to the adjudication pause causes meas-  
22      urable harm to American economic output, scientific  
23      advancement, and national competitiveness.

24              (13) The combination of armed hostilities with  
25      Iran and the adjudication pause has created an un-

1       precedented situation in which Iranian nationals in  
2       the United States are simultaneously unable to re-  
3       turn safely to their home country due to war, unable  
4       to maintain or obtain lawful immigration status due  
5       to the United States Government’s refusal to adju-  
6       dicate their applications, and unable to work lawfully  
7       to support themselves and their families—a conver-  
8       gence of harms that demands targeted legislative re-  
9       lief.

10           (14) It is in the national interest of the United  
11       States to provide temporary protection and work au-  
12       thorization to these individuals to prevent unjust  
13       hardship, maintain economic productivity, uphold  
14       the integrity of the immigration system by ensuring  
15       that individuals who comply with the law are not pe-  
16       nalized for government-caused delays, and to dem-  
17       onstrate that the United States distinguishes be-  
18       tween the Iranian people—many of whom oppose the  
19       Iranian regime—and the Government of the Islamic  
20       Republic of Iran with which the United States is in  
21       conflict.

22   **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

23       In this Act:

24           (1) **ADJUDICATION PAUSE.**—The term “adju-  
25       dication pause” means any suspension, hold, delay,

1 or de facto cessation of the adjudication by U.S.  
2 Citizenship and Immigration Services of benefit ap-  
3 plications filed by nationals of Iran that was initi-  
4 ated on or after December 1, 2025, whether pursu-  
5 ant to executive order, presidential proclamation,  
6 agency policy memorandum, or other directive.

7 (2) BENEFIT APPLICATION.—The term “benefit  
8 application” means—

9 (A) an application for change of non-  
10 immigrant classification under section 248 of  
11 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
12 1258), for extension of stay, or for adjustment  
13 of status under section 245 of such Act (8  
14 U.S.C. 1255); and

15 (B) an application for employment author-  
16 ization or for renewal of an employment author-  
17 ization document under section 274A(h)(3) of  
18 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
19 1324a(h)(3)) and the regulations promulgated  
20 thereunder.

21 (3) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term “eligible  
22 individual” means an individual who—

23 (A) is a national of Iran;

24 (B) was lawfully admitted to the United  
25 States or otherwise lawfully present;



1 (C) filed, prior to or during the adjudica-  
2 tion pause, a benefit application, that was not  
3 adjudicated due, in whole or in part, to the ad-  
4 judication pause; and

5 (D) has—

6 (i) a nonimmigrant status or an au-  
7 thorized period of stay that has expired or  
8 will expire during the period of the adju-  
9 dication pause, such that the alien's con-  
10 tinued lawful presence depends on the  
11 pendency of the unadjudicated benefit ap-  
12 plication; or

13 (ii) an employment authorization—

14 (I) that has expired or will expire  
15 during the period of the adjudication  
16 pause; and

17 (II) with respect to which any  
18 applicable automatic extension period  
19 under section 274a.13(d) of title 8,  
20 Code of Federal Regulations (or any  
21 successor regulation), has expired or  
22 will expire before the adjudication  
23 pause is terminated or the benefit ap-  
24 plication is adjudicated.

1           (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
2           the Secretary of Homeland Security.

3   **SEC. 4. DESIGNATION OF TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS**  
4                           **FOR ELIGIBLE IRANIAN NATIONALS.**

5           (a) DESIGNATION.—Notwithstanding any other pro-  
6   vision of law, for the purpose of section 244 of the Immi-  
7   gration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1254a), Iran shall  
8   be treated as if it had been designated under subsection  
9   (b)(1)(C) of that section, subject to the provisions of this  
10   section.

11          (b) DURATION.—

12               (1) IN GENERAL.—The initial designation  
13   under subsection (a) shall be in effect for a period  
14   of 18 months beginning on the date of enactment of  
15   this Act.

16               (2) EXTENSION.—The Secretary shall extend  
17   the designation under subsection (a) for additional  
18   periods of 6 months each if the Secretary deter-  
19   mines, at least 60 days before the end of the current  
20   designation period, that—

21                       (A) the adjudication pause remains in ef-  
22                       fect, in whole or in part; or

23                       (B) the conditions that gave rise to the ad-  
24                       judication pause continue to exist such that eli-

1           gible individuals cannot reasonably expect time-  
2           ly adjudication of their pending applications.

3           (3) MANDATORY EXTENSION.—If the Secretary  
4           fails to make the determination described in para-  
5           graph (2) at least 60 days before the end of the cur-  
6           rent designation period, the designation shall be  
7           automatically extended for 6 months.

8           (c) SCOPE.—The designation under this section shall  
9           apply exclusively to eligible individuals. Nothing in this  
10          section shall be construed to create a designation for all  
11          nationals of Iran.

12   **SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION.**

13          (a) ELIGIBILITY INDIVIDUALS.—An alien may be  
14          granted temporary protected status in accordance with  
15          this Act if the alien—

16               (1) is an eligible individual;

17               (2) is physically present in the United States on  
18          the date of enactment of this Act;

19               (3) has been continuously physically present in  
20          the United States since December 2, 2025;

21               (4) is not inadmissible under section 212(a) of  
22          the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
23          1182(a));

1           (5) has not been convicted of any felony or 2  
2           or more misdemeanors committed in the United  
3           States;

4           (6) is not described in section 208(b)(2)(A) of  
5           the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
6           1158(b)(2)(A)) (relating to persecution of others,  
7           conviction of particularly serious crimes, commission  
8           of serious nonpolitical crimes, or danger to the secu-  
9           rity of the United States); and

10          (7) is not an alien whom the adjudicating offi-  
11          cer or the Secretary knows or has reasonable  
12          grounds to believe—

13                (A) is or has been an official or agent of  
14                the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran,  
15                the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or any  
16                entity owned or controlled by the foregoing, who  
17                has been responsible for or complicit in, or has  
18                directly or indirectly ordered, controlled, or oth-  
19                erwise directed—

20                   (i) acts of corruption, including cor-  
21                   ruption related to the extraction, sale, or  
22                   significant diversion of natural resources  
23                   or public funds;

24                   (ii) gross violations of internationally  
25                   recognized human rights, including torture,

1 extrajudicial killing, prolonged arbitrary  
2 detention, enforced disappearance, or sys-  
3 tematic repression of the rights to freedom  
4 of expression, assembly, or association; or

5 (iii) the provision of material support,  
6 financing, or significant services to the  
7 Government of the Islamic Republic of  
8 Iran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard  
9 Corps, or any person or entity that is the  
10 subject of sanctions or designation under  
11 Executive Order 13553, Executive Order  
12 13846, the Iran Threat Reduction and  
13 Syria Human Rights Act of 2012, or any  
14 other provision of United States law relat-  
15 ing to Iran; or

16 (B) is an immediate family member of an  
17 alien described in subparagraph (A) who has  
18 knowingly obtained, or who reasonably should  
19 have known that they were obtaining, any fi-  
20 nancial benefit or other material advantage de-  
21 rived from the illicit activity of that alien de-  
22 scribed in subparagraph (A).

23 (b) APPLICATION.—

24 (1) COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATION.—Not  
25 later than 30 days after the date of enactment of

1       this Act, the Secretary shall commence the adjudica-  
2       tion of applications for temporary protected status  
3       filed in accordance with this Act.

4           (2) TIMING OF ADJUDICATIONS.—The Sec-  
5       retary shall adjudicate any application filed in ac-  
6       cordance with this Act not later than 90 days after  
7       receipt of such application.

8           (3) FEE.—The fee for an application filed in  
9       accordance with this section shall not exceed the fee  
10      charged for an application for temporary protected  
11      status under section 244 of the Immigration and  
12      Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1254a).

13       (c) WAIVER OF GROUNDS OF INELIGIBILITY.—In de-  
14      termining an alien's eligibility under this section, the Sec-  
15      retary may waive any ground of ineligibility under sub-  
16      section (a).

17   **SEC. 6. EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION.**

18       (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall authorize an  
19      alien granted temporary protected status under section  
20      244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
21      1254a) in accordance with this Act to engage in employ-  
22      ment in the United States and shall provide such alien  
23      with an employment authorization document.

24       (b) TIMING.—

1           (1) INTERIM EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION.—

2           Not later than 30 days after an eligible individual  
3           files an application for temporary protected status,  
4           the Secretary shall issue an interim employment au-  
5           thorization document valid for a period of 180 days,  
6           unless the Secretary determines within such 30-day  
7           period that the applicant is ineligible.

8           (2) FINAL EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION.—

9           Upon granting temporary protected status, the Sec-  
10          retary shall issue an employment authorization docu-  
11          ment valid for the duration of the designation under  
12          section 4.

13          (c) AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF EXISTING EAD.—

14          For any eligible individual who has a pending benefit ap-  
15          plication for an employment authorization that is subject  
16          to the adjudication pause, the automatic extension period  
17          under section 274a.13(d) of title 8, Code of Federal Regu-  
18          lations, shall be extended for an additional period equal  
19          to the duration of the adjudication pause, plus 180 days.

20          (d) NO GAP IN WORK AUTHORIZATION.—For pur-

21          poses of any Federal or State law, regulation, or policy,  
22          an eligible individual who is granted temporary protected  
23          status in accordance with this Act shall be deemed to have  
24          been continuously authorized for employment from the  
25          date on which the individual's prior employment author-

1 ization expired due to the adjudication pause through the  
 2 date on which employment authorization is issued under  
 3 this section. No employer shall be liable under section  
 4 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
 5 1324a) for employing such individual during such gap pe-  
 6 riod.

7 **SEC. 7. PROTECTION OF PENDING APPLICATIONS AND STA-**  
 8 **TUS.**

9 (a) NO PREJUDICE.—The filing for, receipt of, or  
 10 grant of temporary protected status in accordance with  
 11 this Act shall not—

12 (1) be considered a negative factor or adverse  
 13 evidence in the adjudication of any pending or fu-  
 14 ture application for change of nonimmigrant classi-  
 15 fication, extension of stay, adjustment of status, em-  
 16 ployment authorization, or any other immigration  
 17 benefit;

18 (2) constitute an abandonment of any pending  
 19 application for any immigration benefit;

20 (3) affect the priority date, processing date, or  
 21 queue position of any pending application; or

22 (4) be used as a basis for initiating removal  
 23 proceedings or for any enforcement action.

24 (b) PROTECTION AGAINST UNLAWFUL PRESENCE.—  
 25 No period during which an eligible individual has tem-



1 porary protected status under this Act, or during which  
2 the individual's application for such status is pending,  
3 shall be considered a period of unlawful presence under  
4 section 212(a)(9)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality  
5 Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(9)(B)).

6 (c) PROTECTION AGAINST ACCRUAL DURING  
7 PAUSE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no  
8 period during which an eligible individual's application  
9 was pending and subject to the adjudication pause shall  
10 be considered a period of unlawful presence for purposes  
11 of any provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act,  
12 regardless of whether the individual is granted temporary  
13 protected status under this Act.

14 (d) TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary shall  
15 establish a process by which individuals granted tem-  
16 porary protected status in accordance with this Act may  
17 apply for advance parole for travel outside the United  
18 States. Such travel shall not constitute an abandonment  
19 of any pending application for change of status, adjust-  
20 ment of status, or other immigration benefit.

21 **SEC. 8. REPORTING.**

22 Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment  
23 of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter until all applica-  
24 tions subject to the adjudication pause have been adju-  
25 dicated, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on

1 the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the  
2 Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate a report that  
3 includes—

4 (1) the total number of applications subject to  
5 the adjudication pause, disaggregated by application  
6 type;

7 (2) the number of applications adjudicated dur-  
8 ing the reporting period;

9 (3) the number of adjudication applications ap-  
10 proved, denied, and pending;

11 (4) the average processing time for adjudicated  
12 applications;

13 (5) the total number of applications for tem-  
14 porary protected status filed in accordance with this  
15 Act during the reporting period, and the cumulative  
16 total since the date of enactment;

17 (6) the number of applications for temporary  
18 protected status approved during the reporting pe-  
19 riod, and the cumulative total since the date of en-  
20 actment; and

21 (7) the number of applications for temporary  
22 protected status denied during the reporting period,  
23 disaggregated by the basis for denial, including the  
24 number denied on national security grounds under  
25 section 5(a)(6), the number denied on public safety

1 grounds under section 5(a)(5), and the number de-  
2 nied on all other grounds, together with a descrip-  
3 tion of the categories of such other grounds.

4 **SEC. 9. RULEMAKING.**

5 (a) INTERIM FINAL RULE.—Not later than 30 days  
6 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall  
7 publish an interim final rule implementing this Act, which  
8 shall take effect immediately upon publication.

9 (b) FINAL RULE.—Not later than 180 days after the  
10 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish  
11 a final rule implementing this Act after providing an op-  
12 portunity for public comment on the interim final rule.

○