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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.

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

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.

○