

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to reduce the waiting period for employment authorization for asylum applicants, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. MERKLEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to reduce the waiting period for employment authorization for asylum applicants, 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 “Assisting Seekers in
5 Pursuit of Integration and Rapid Employment Act” or the
6 “ASPIRE Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR ALIENS SEEK-**
2 **ING ASYLUM.**

3 Paragraph (2) of section 208(d) of the Immigration
4 and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1158(d)) is amended to
5 read as follows:

6 “(2) EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION.—

7 “(A) ELIGIBILITY.—Subject to subpara-
8 graphs (B) and (C), the Secretary of Homeland
9 Security shall authorize employment for an ap-
10 plicant for asylum whose application for asylum
11 has not been determined frivolous.

12 “(B) APPLICATION.—An applicant for asy-
13 lum who is not otherwise eligible for employ-
14 ment authorization shall not be granted such
15 authorization prior to 30 days after the date of
16 filing of the application for asylum.

17 “(C) TERM.—Employment authorization
18 for an applicant for asylum shall be valid until
19 the date on which an applicant is issued a final
20 denial of the applicable application, including
21 administrative and judicial review.”.

22 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23 (a) U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERV-
24 ICES.—

25 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
26 appropriated to the Director of U.S. Citizenship and

1 Immigration Services to increase the capacity of
2 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to ad-
3 dress the asylum backlog, including by hiring addi-
4 tional asylum officers and providing basic asylum
5 training and translation and interpretation services,
6 \$2,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2024, to remain
7 available until expended.

8 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—Not less than 75 percent
9 of the amount authorized to be appropriated under
10 paragraph (1) shall be used to hire personnel.

11 (b) DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—There
12 is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Home-
13 land Security for the Shelter and Services Program, ad-
14 ministered jointly by U.S. Customs and Border Protection
15 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to pro-
16 vide State and local governments and nonprofit organiza-
17 tions with funding for the provision of shelter, food, trans-
18 portation, and other support services to migrants encoun-
19 tered by the Secretary \$10,000,000,000 for fiscal year
20 2024, to remain available until expended.