



# GlobalCare **NEWS**

## **Retrogression: Important Updates**

### **Relief is imminent...**

Since our last update on retrogression in January, there has been considerable movement on Capitol Hill with key members of Congress to address retrogression or more commonly referred to as the EB3 challenge. Through the Lobbying efforts from the American Hospital Association (AHA) and in conjunction with The Spectrum Group, relief is said to be imminent. GlobalCare is committed to keeping you informed on this very important issue.

### **What to expect from the 109th Congress...**

As you may be aware, there is a focused lobbying effort in Congress by the AHA and The Spectrum Group to name a few. One solution is to include a legislative fix that will harvest unused visa numbers from 2001 through 2004 for healthcare workers. The target is to put this fix as a "rider" in the Iraq Appropriations Bill that Congress is scheduled to pass this April. The good news is that this solution was utilized before in 1999, so the confidence levels are high that both the Senate and House will look favorably on this amendment to pass this important legislation. If the bill passes with the rider amendment on schedule, a solution to this problem could happen in early April 05'.

### **How did we get to this solution...**

There are over 130,000 unused visas from 2001 through 2004 and that number would more than suffice to solve the short term problem of retrogression. These "unused visas" exist because each year there are 140,000 visas available and due to the slow processing times, the USCIS has not hit that 140,000 mark for the last 4 years.

### **International Recruitment a sound strategy...**

Retrogression resulted in the best interest of solving a backlog of pending visa applications. The intention was never to penalize countries like India, China or the Philippines. It was also not designed to increase waiting periods for pending and more recently filed visa applications while the backlog cases are brought current.

Clients who hire international candidates in 2005 and beyond are allowed to file their I140 applications and will most likely see improved processing times as a result of retrogression. Many clients who have already hired candidates and are experiencing potential delays due to the quota issue are understandably concerned. Some are taking a "wait-and-see" approach to further international recruitment, waiting to hear that retrogression has been solved. We do understand the thinking behind this but delaying your next hiring tour will most definitely affect your future staffing goals. Especially for our California based clients with the news that the nurse-to-patient ratio issue is being upheld, international recruitment to meet future staffing goals must continue.

International recruitment is a sound strategy and really one of many solutions that need to be implemented to protect your overall staffing plans.

### **GlobalCare programs...**

On March 12-22, 2005 a major Northern California Hospital System embarked on a second GlobalCare sponsored Hiring Tour to Manila. Their goal to hire upwards of 50 - 70 nurses.




Why? Because they understand that the nurse shortage is not going away today, tomorrow or in the near future.

What can I do to get involved and show my support to the Lobbying efforts...

GlobalCare is well informed to advise you on the best ways for you to support each of the Lobby Groups that are working diligently to solve this problem. Many of you have already signed letters to Congress to show your support. Some of you have also sponsored generous donations to various Lobby Groups. We ask that you get involved in a way that best works for your facility.

### **What's ahead...**

In the collective wisdom of the AHA, Lobby Groups and our immigration firm, the prevailing view is that "relief is imminent". Based on that and a historical view, we advise that you:

-  Stay the course with your current hires; they will soon be back on a predictable arrival schedule.
-  Plan accordingly in terms of continued implementation of International Recruitment as one of many staffing solutions.
-  Plan proactively. Do not delay your recruiting efforts. You do not want to be behind the hiring curve when a solution is implemented.

For more information, please call GlobalCare.

