

Support for the Heartland Visa Act of 2024

“The Heartland Visa Act would provide American communities with a powerful new tool for economic growth, innovation, and revitalization,” said **John Lettieri, President and CEO of the Economic Innovation Group**. “This legislation recognizes that highly skilled immigrants deliver vital benefits to U.S. workers and communities, from new jobs and businesses to higher wages to more tax revenues that support essential local services. Enacting a Heartland Visa is a long-overdue way to ensure that these benefits reach areas of the country left behind by U.S. immigration policy for too long.”

“Policymakers have long struggled to address the problems of parts of the country with stagnating or declining populations,” said **Stan Veuger, Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute**. “Heartland Visas are an innovative and promising tool for such communities—if they believe high-skilled immigrants can bring growth and dynamism, the federal government should not stand in their way.”

“The Heartland Visa would be a powerful new tool for revitalizing regions eager for economic growth by channeling entrepreneurial energy into rising cities and towns throughout the American heartland,” said **Steve Case, Chairman and CEO of Revolution and Co-founder of AOL**. “Today, high-growth startups—and the jobs and economic vitality that they bring—remain concentrated in a few coastal cities, with roughly 75 percent of venture capital going to just three states: California, New York, and Massachusetts. I applaud Senators Young and Manchin for championing this bipartisan solution to create a more regionally diverse innovation economy.”

“Rural towns and counties across the United States are in economic free-fall due to population decline and brain-drain,” said **Samuel Hammond, Senior Economist at the Foundation for American Innovation**. “An opt-in program for communities in America's heartland to attract entrepreneurial and high-skilled immigrants can not only help stem the tide, but would lay the foundations for long-term economic development and revitalization.”

“The Heartland Visa bill is an important step toward building an immigration system that benefits Americans and incentivizes migrants to enter legally,” said **Brent Gardner, Chief Government Affairs Officer and Senior Vice President at Americans for Prosperity**. “Senator Young’s legislation would empower many overlooked communities to opt-in to the system and fill critical gaps with skilled workers. These mutually beneficial relationships strengthen communities and make prosperity possible. Also, by incentivizing people to come to the U.S. the right way, the bill will help to reduce illegal immigration. The Heartland Visa perfectly encapsulates [AFP’s Four Pillars of Border Security and Visa Reform](#), which calls on Congress to pass legislation to secure the border, clarify immigration law, and make America a more competitive nation.”

“The Heartland Visa Act would reduce the budget deficit by tens of billions every year, grow the economy, and revitalize communities with exactly the type of immigrants America should welcome more of: Young, highly educated, and English proficient,” said **Daniel Di Martino, Graduate Fellow at the Manhattan Institute**. “At a time when the border crisis has wrecked American immigration, the Heartland Visa Act would ensure that America doesn’t just close the border but welcomes legal immigrants based on their merits.”

“CAE strongly supports the Heartland Visa Act, co-sponsored by Senators Todd Young (R-IN) and Joe Manchin (I-WV), because the legislation will help revitalize U.S. counties struggling with demographic and economic decline through the power of foreign-born talent, ingenuity, and entrepreneurship,” said **John Dearie, President of the Center for American Entrepreneurship**. “The legislation is carefully crafted, entailing criteria that promote America’s economic and security interests. The Heartland Visa Act leverages a great historical strength of America—common sense entry of highly skilled immigrants—and directs that skilled talent to areas of the country that need it most. CAE thanks Senators Young and Manchin for their leadership and looks forward to working with them toward the bill’s swift enactment.”

“High-skilled immigrants are essential to the success of the U.S. startup ecosystem, driving innovation as founders and employees of startup companies,” said **Jennifer Weinhart, Senior Policy Adviser at Engine**. “But the U.S. immigration system provides limited options to welcome the skilled talent the country needs—a need that is particularly great in regions located outside of thriving technology hubs. The Heartland Visa Act of 2024 is a crucial step in the right direction in support of U.S. innovation and entrepreneurship, providing a new visa pathway for high-skilled workers—including startup founders—that will strengthen and revitalize communities.”

“The Heartland Visa offers a new pathway for highly skilled immigrants to come to the United States without imposing unnecessary restrictions on their ability to create businesses and provide jobs—adding this visa would be an improvement to our current immigration system,” said **Josh Bedi, Senior Fellow in Economic Opportunity at the Pioneer Institute**.

“The Heartland Visa would give struggling regions a powerful new tool to tap into the revitalizing potential of high-skilled immigration,” said **Jeremy Neufeld, Senior Immigration Fellow at IFP**. “IFP is excited to support a proposal that would help spread the opportunities afforded by immigrant entrepreneurship and innovation.”

“We’re pleased to support the Heartland Visa Act of 2024. The bill offers a smart, localized solution to revitalizing American communities with demographic and economic challenges,” said **Cecilia Esterline, Senior Immigration Policy Analyst at the Niskanen Center**. “By mandating robust wage requirements and allowing counties to opt into the program, rural communities and declining cities alike can capitalize on the opportunity to attract top immigrant talent and spur economic growth while protecting American workers.”

“Businesses thrive where they can find a talented and dependable workforce to deliver products and services to consumers at prices they can afford,” said **Logan Kolas, Director of Technology Policy at the American Consumer Institute**. “As labor pools in towns and cities across the country dry up, businesses leave and take their jobs, innovative ideas, and technology with them. To ensure that the United States stays technologically competitive as the internet age matures—and to help combat population decline that has suffocated economic growth in the heartland—policymakers should embrace heartland visas for skilled immigrants through programs like the Heartland Visa Act of 2024.”

The U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted a bipartisan resolution in 2024 calling on Congress to assist cities in confronting their economic and demographic challenges and endorsed a Heartland Visa “that would provide a new pathway for skilled immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs who wish to settle in welcoming communities facing population stagnation or decline that would opt-in to such a policy if it aligns with their local economic development goals.”

The following organizations endorse the Heartland Visa Act of 2024:

Economic Innovation Group, Americans for Prosperity, Center for American Entrepreneurship, Council on National Security and Immigration, Engine, Foundation for American Innovation, IFP, Niskanen Center, Pioneer Institute, and The LIBRE Initiative.