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KATHLEEN SEBELIUS
KANSAS

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MINNESOTA

JIM GIBBONS
NEVADA

RICK PERRY
TEXAS

September 11, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Representative Boehner:

As the chief executives of our respective states, we appreciate the enormity of the task involved in reforming our nation's immigration laws. Like you, we recognize the paramount importance of protecting and preserving the safety and interests of the United States and its citizens while recognizing the states' and nation's economic needs.

Fundamentally, we believe that our states' businesses should be able to find the world's best-educated workers among our own citizens. Toward that end, we continue to make significant investments in math and science education and are ensuring that our states' two- and four-year colleges and universities are able to accommodate more students who are preparing for high-demand fields, especially in engineering, math and computer science.

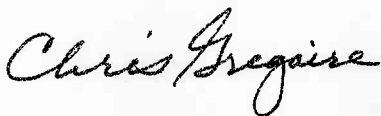
While we concentrate on building a highly skilled and competitive workforce for increasing opportunities in high-tech jobs, unfortunately, today, we and our nation face a critical shortage of highly skilled professionals in math and science to fill current needs. Until we are able to address this workforce shortage, we must recognize that foreign talent has a role to play in our ability to keep companies located in our state and country; and, therefore, need to ensure the increased availability of temporary H1-B visas, and permanent resident visas (green cards).

Under the current H1-B system, the number of visas available has been running out faster and faster each year. The current base cap of 65,000 was arbitrarily set in 1990, and today bears no relation to our economy and our state's demand for skilled professionals. In fact, in fiscal year 2007, the supply of H1-B visas did not last eight weeks into the filing period, and ran out more than four months before the fiscal year even began; and in fiscal year 2008, the supply ran out on the first day of the filing period.

Our green card system, also last devised in 1990, faces severe shortages that most heavily impact the high technology industry, forcing some of the most innovative contributors to our economy to wait well in excess of five years for a green card. Because of these delays we are seeing more and more of these talented individuals leave their U.S. jobs and return home.

If states like ours are to remain world leaders in innovation and intend to continue to see the job growth that is so vital to our economies, we must keep our employers in our states and ensure there is a skilled workforce in this country to fill their immediate needs. While wholesale immigration reform may not be possible in the 110th Congress, we urge Congressional action this year that recognizes states' immediate need to recruit and retain professionals in key sectors, while we continue to produce here at home the skilled workforce our companies need in the long-term.

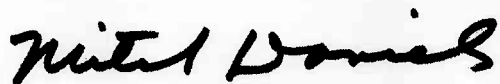
Sincerely,



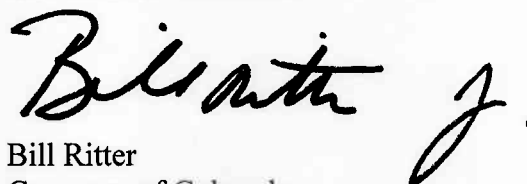
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor of Washington



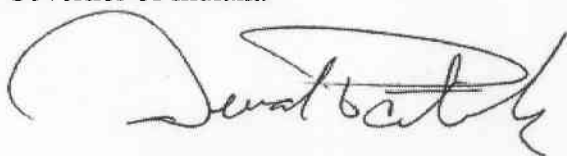
Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California



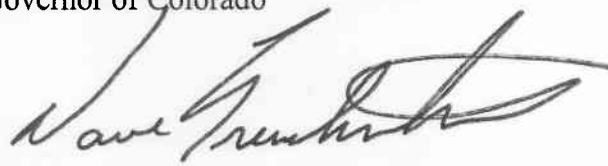
Mitch Daniels
Governor of Indiana



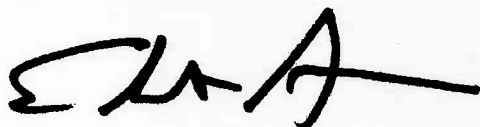
Bill Ritter
Governor of Colorado



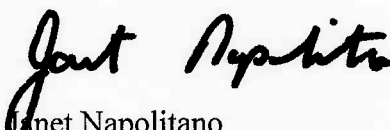
Deval Patrick
Governor of Massachusetts



Dave Freudenthal
Governor of Wyoming



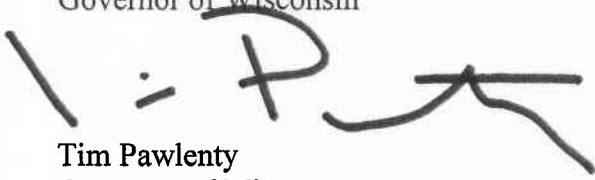
Eliot Spitzer
Governor of New York



Janet Napolitano
Governor of Arizona



Tim Doyle
Governor of Wisconsin



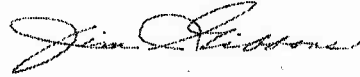
Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota



Rick Perry
Governor of Texas



Kathleen Sebelius
Governor of Kansas



Jim Gibbons
Governor of Nevada