

The “Let Immigrants Kickstart Employment (LIKE) Act”

The “Let Immigrants Kickstart Employment Act,” or “LIKE Act” is a bill that encourages immigrant innovators to establish and develop their start-up companies in the United States to spur U.S. economic growth, create jobs for U.S. workers, and enhance our competitive advantage on the world stage.

Despite widespread evidence that high-skilled immigrants are significant contributors to the U.S. economy, our current immigration laws don’t provide a viable visa option for such individuals to start a new venture.

The LIKE Act—

- Creates a new temporary visa for individuals who—
 - possess an ownership interest in a start-up entity that has received the requisite amount of qualifying investments or government awards or grants;
 - will play a central and active role in the management or operations of the entity; and
 - possess the knowledge, skills, or experience to substantially assist the entity with its growth and success.
- Allows the founder to receive additional of extensions of their temporary status—up to 5 years—if the founder retains an ownership interest in the start-up entity and the entity meets certain growth-related benchmarks, such as job creation and revenue generation.
- Allows the founder to apply for and receive lawful permanent residence if the start-up entity meets certain additional benchmarks that demonstrate the founder has a proven track record of success in business development.
- Allows a start-up entity that serves as the basis for an approved petition for a founder to petition for temporary visas for a limited number of additional personnel who will serve in managerial or executive positions and are essential to the growth and success of the entity.

The LIKE Act is supported by the National Venture Capital Association, Engine, etc.