

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 203

To designate the Republic of Korea as a visa waiver pilot program country for one year under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 7, 1997

Mr. KIM (for himself, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, and Mr. UNDERWOOD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To designate the Republic of Korea as a visa waiver pilot program country for one year under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

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. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) The Republic of Korea and the United
6 States have close historical and military ties.

7 (2) The Republic of Korea has been designated
8 as a major non-NATO ally.

9 (3) The Republic of Korea is the sixth largest
10 trading partner of the United States.

1 (4) There is increasing demand by citizens of
2 the Republic of Korea to visit the United States,
3 with an increased demand for nonimmigrant visas
4 from a 1982 total of 800 to a 1995 total of over
5 2,000 applications per day.

6 (5) During calendar year 1995, a total of
7 592,000 Korean citizens visited the United States,
8 an increase of 19 percent over calendar year 1994.

9 (6) According to the United States Department
10 of Commerce, overall tourism dollars spent in the
11 United States by tourists from the Republic of
12 Korea exceeded \$680,000,000 in fiscal year 1993.

13 (7) According to the United States Census Bu-
14 reau, in 1995 the United States exported goods val-
15 ued at \$25,379,874,000 to the Republic of Korea,
16 and imported goods valued at \$24,183,941,000 from
17 the Republic of Korea, a trade surplus of nearly
18 \$1,200,000,000.

19 (8) Currently all potential Republic of Korea
20 travelers seeking to obtain a travel visa to the
21 United States must apply at the United States Em-
22 bassy in Seoul, regardless of their place of residence
23 in the Republic of Korea.

24 (9) The United States consular affairs office at
25 the United States Embassy in Seoul has not been

1 able to meet the growing demand for nonimmigrant
2 visas to the United States due to lack of space and
3 personnel, resulting in unnecessary delays, frustra-
4 tion, and loss of economic opportunity for the
5 United States.

6 (10) During the past year numerous press re-
7 ports and media stories have centered around the
8 growing dissatisfaction of the South Korean people
9 in relation to such delays and the lack of adequate
10 protection against the natural elements.

11 (11) The Republic of Korea has a unique place
12 of importance with respect to the United States
13 under the provisions of the United States-North
14 Korea Agreed Framework.

15 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AS A**
16 **VISA WAIVER PILOT PROGRAM COUNTRY.**

17 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provi-
18 sion of law, beginning 60 days after date of enactment
19 of this Act, the Republic of Korea shall be designated for
20 one year as a visa waiver pilot program country for the
21 purposes of section 217 of the Immigration and National-
22 ity Act.

23 (b) **AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE.**—Notwithstanding
24 any other provision of law, the requirements for designa-
25 tion of a country under section 217 of the Immigration

1 and Nationality Act shall not apply to any designation of
2 the Republic of Korea as a visa waiver pilot program coun-
3 try under such section.

4 (c) REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—No later than one
5 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
6 of State and the Attorney General shall compile and sub-
7 mit to Congress a report evaluating the visa waiver pilot
8 program country designation under subsection (a) and the
9 qualifications of the Republic of Korea for designation
10 under the provisions of section 217 of the Immigration
11 and Nationality Act.

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