

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 18, 2019

Kenneth T. (Ken) Cuccinelli  
Acting Director  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
111 Massachusetts Avenue  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Acting Director Cuccinelli,

We encourage the efforts of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to improve and modernize our immigration system, consistent with 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. That is why we have been particularly interested in the Department of Homeland Security's Known Employer Pilot Program. However, we write to ask about the status of the Pilot and the prospects of an expansion of participating employers, especially in the area of R-1 visas, given interest from an organization important to our districts known as the Bocharanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS).

Our districts have seen significant economic growth, the key to which has been a steady supply of qualified individuals ready to work and contribute to our communities. Further, the immigration that has provided some of this labor supply has added to the diverse cultural fabric across the country.

However, delays in the consideration and approval of visa petitions are a throttle on that growth. That is why we were heartened to see the Department move forward with its Known Employer Pilot Project, given its potential to further foster this economic development. Although USCIS has said that the Pilot would include up to nine participants, there are currently only five enrolled. However, we are aware of at least one large, diverse, well-established and financially secure religious institution that is interested in participating—BAPS. This socio-spiritual organization represents the largest network of Hindu temples in North America and has organized events ranging from health fairs to environmental initiatives. In fact, BAPS has 97 houses of worship across 32 states and 91 congressional districts. Large, diverse employers such as BAPS are exactly the type of organization that are suited for the pilot project, and we would strongly encourage you to give all due consideration to their efforts to join.

Given this, could you please:

1. Provide any initial commentary on the success of the Known Employer Pilot Project;
2. Explain whether you intend to extend the pilot project again beyond May 31, 2020;
3. Explain why only five organizations have been added to the pilot project to date, and whether additional organizations up to the cap of nine have been considered; and

4. Explain the criteria that is used to determine who participates in this pilot project?

Thank you for any timely answers you can provide.

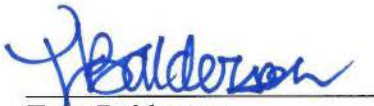
Very respectfully,



Pete Olson  
Member of Congress



Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress



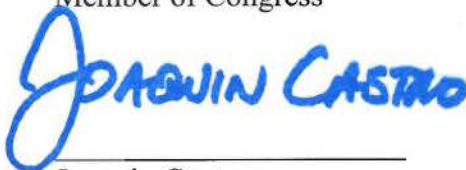
Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



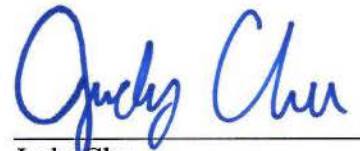
Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter  
Member of Congress



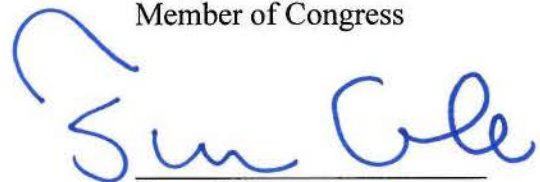
Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



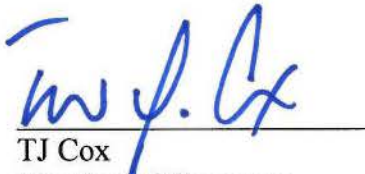
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Tom Cole  
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress

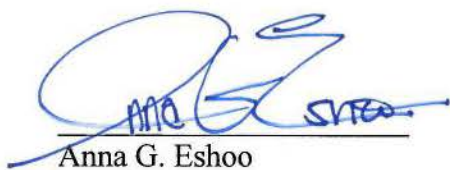


TJ Cox  
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress





Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



Lance Gooden  
Member of Congress



French Hill  
Member of Congress



Will Hurd  
Member of Congress



Joseph P. Kennedy III  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



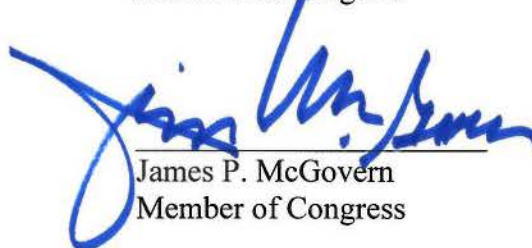
Tom Malinowski  
Member of Congress



Brian Mast  
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



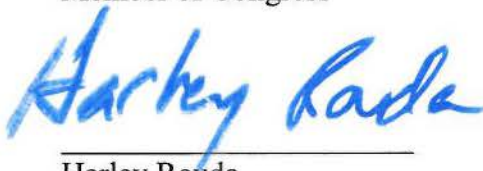
Daniel P. Meuser  
Member of Congress



Ralph Norman  
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



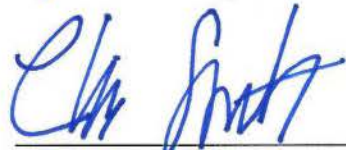
Harley Rouda  
Member of Congress



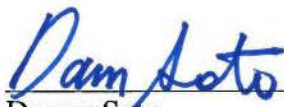
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



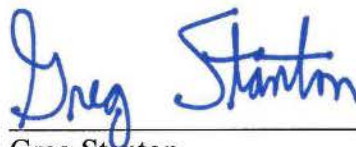
Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



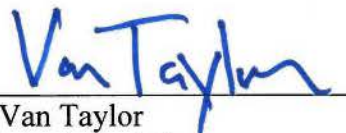
Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



Haley Stevens  
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



Van Taylor  
Member of Congress



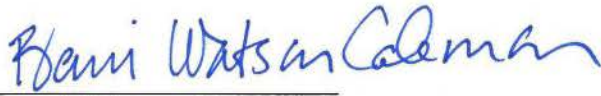
Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson-Coleman  
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



Rob Woodall  
Member of Congress



Ron Wright  
Member of Congress



Val Demings  
Member of Congress





**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

February 4, 2020

The Honorable Pete Olson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Olson:

Thank you for your December 18, 2019 letter regarding Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) created the Known Employer pilot to assess the effectiveness of streamlined processing for certain immigrant and nonimmigrant employment-based visa petitions. USCIS launched the pilot in March 2016, and it has subsequently been extended through May 31, 2020.

Participation in the Known Employer pilot is limited to nine employers at any one time, and there are currently four openings created by the removal of inactive participants. USCIS will consider your recommendation, but please note that an invitation to participate in the pilot is based upon a number of factors, including the organization or entity's filing volume across the eligible immigrant and nonimmigrant classifications.

USCIS is considering an extension of the pilot beyond May 2020, and, to the extent possible and within budget constraints, is also considering a standard, formal way to allow employers to apply for participation in the pilot.

More information about the Known Employer pilot can be found on the USCIS website.<sup>1</sup>

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. The co-signers of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark R. Koumans".

Mark R. Koumans  
Deputy Director

---

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/information-employers-employees/known-employer-pilot>.