



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

HQ 70/6.2.8

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Regional Directors
Service Center Directors
District Directors
National Benefits Center Director
Chief, Field Operations
National Security and Records Verification

From: Michael Aytes /s/
Associate Director, Domestic Operations

Date: December 26, 2006

Re: **Public Law 109-423 – Reauthorization of H-1C Program under the Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Act of 2005**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to notify U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers that the Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Act of 1999 (NRDAA) has been reauthorized for an additional three years and to inform the officers of the effect of this extension on the adjudication of Form I-129 for H-1C nurses.

2. Background

The Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Act of 1999 (NRDAA) established the H-1C Program to reduce the shortage of qualified nurses in health professional shortage areas. NRDAA allowed qualified hospitals to employ temporary foreign workers as registered nurses for up to three years under the H-1C visas. NRDAA expired on June 13, 2005.

3. Public Law 109-423

On December 20, 2006, with the enactment of Pub.L. 109-423, Congress reauthorized the H-1C program for an additional three years. The elements of the program are unaffected. The provisions take effect immediately and the revisions to the regulations will follow. The reauthorization expires on December 20, 2009.

4. Procedural Impact

In accordance with previous practice, all I-129 petitions for the H-1C classification will be adjudicated exclusively by the Vermont Service Center.

5. Questions

Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed through appropriate channels to Service Center Operations' Business and Trade Services Branch.