

# U.S. KOREA CONNECT

Expanded Opportunity. Infinite Possibility.

**SUPPORTING A PROFESSIONAL VISA FOR KOREA**  
**Good for the U.S. Economy – Good for American Jobs**

Over **350,000 U.S. jobs** are supported by trade with Korea. In 2012 the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) entered into full force. The benefits for the U.S. have been great but could be even greater if U.S. companies had access to South Koreans with specialized skills. Yet, no provisions were included in the U.S.- Korea FTA for specialized, skilled visas to help further strengthen the trade between the two nations. More than 55% of senior executives polled from U.S. companies say that they have lost out on business opportunities because they didn't have the specialized skilled employees they needed.

**Every other U.S. FTA with major trading partners has included professional visa quotas**

|           | Visa Quotas   | Trade volume (2015) | Number of Students in U.S. (2015) | Inbound FDI (2015) | Number of jobs created (2014) |
|-----------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Australia | 10,500 (2005) | 65 billion          | 4,511                             | 800 million        | 94,800                        |
| Singapore | 5,400 (2004)  | 68 billion          | 4,727                             | 780 million        | 35,600                        |
| Korea     | 0 (2012)      | 148.8 billion       | 63,710                            | 1.1 billion        | 45,100                        |

**How do visas for Korean professionals bring a win-win effect to the economy for both countries?**

- Korea sends approximately 64,000 students to the U.S. annually which includes 22,000 STEM majors. Korea sends the third largest number of students after China and India, but on a per capita basis, it is the largest student-sending country to the U.S. from around the world.
  - Korean visa quotas will enable the large number of Korean students to directly apply their knowledge and skills to the U.S. economy
- Korean students excel in STEM fields
  - Korea ranks number 1 worldwide in mathematics and number 4 in science.
  - Retaining the best and brightest Korean students will help accelerate growth of the U.S. economy particularly in areas where STEM majors are required.
- The information and communications technology (ICT) industry is a key area driving U.S. economic growth. Korea has high number of highly trained labor in ICT.

**Granting professional skills visas to Korea will be a win-win for both U.S. and Korea.**

The bipartisan *Partner with Korea ACT* was introduced in both houses of Congress to facilitate increased business opportunities resulting from the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement. The proposed legislation creates up to 15,000 highly-skilled work visas for Korean nationals, bringing the numbers in line with those provided for other FTA partner countries.

H.R. 1019, introduced by Rep. Roskam with 80 cosponsors and S. 1547, introduced by Sen. Isakson with 5 cosponsors will create more opportunities to grow U.S. jobs through exports to Korea. Please cosponsor this important bill.

Please visit [www.USKoreaConnect.org](http://www.USKoreaConnect.org) for information on how to contact local business groups and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea

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