



## April 2013 Barnett Law Group Breaking News

T.S. Eliot said “April is the cruellest month,” but there seems to be some good news this month for U.S. immigration law.

**CIR Senate Bill Introduced:** The long-anticipated Senate bill authored by the Gang of 8 has been released. While the bill does not offer everything to everyone it does have relief for many of the undocumented foreign nationals in the U.S. There will be a cut-off time by which the FN would have to have entered the U.S.; proof of continuous U.S. physical presence; proof of no disqualifying criminal convictions; payment of a fine; payment of back taxes and any other provisions which may be added or deleted from the bill as it makes its way through the legislative process. Hopefully, the final enactment of the law and promulgation of regulations and the filing process will be rolled out this year. Until that time, potential applicants are urged to explore the other current avenues for lawful U.S. status such as grandfathering under Section 245i, the provisional I-601A waiver, the Violence Against Women Act, Affirmative Asylum, U and T visas, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

**H-1B Cap Exceeded in First Five Days of FY2014 Filing Period:** Both the 65,000 regular cap and the 20,000 master’s cap was exceeded by twice the number of petitions received between April 1 to April 5. The USCIS will implement a lottery to determine which petitions will receive visas. While this means our economy is on the rebound it also means that many talented foreign workers will now seek work in other countries.

**DOS Visa Status Check:** The Dept. of State has introduced online case status for both nonimmigrant as well as immigrant visas through entering the visa application type and case number at <https://ceac.state.gov/CEACStatTracker.Status.aspx>

**Paperless Form I-94:** Effective April 26, travelers to the US. will only be issued an admission stamp in their passports. The paper record can and should be printed out from [www.cbc.gov/I94](http://www.cbc.gov/I94) to use for I-9, social security, and driver’s licenses.

**Customer Identity Verification at Field Offices:** Another layer of security will be added beginning May 6 for those applicants appearing for interviews or Infopass Appointments at local field offices. Under this process, staff will take two fingerprints and a photograph of the applicant to verify identity

**Free Immigration Seminars:** In the coming months as the new immigration law takes shape our office will be offering free immigration seminars on a first-come, first-serve basis. Look for newsflashes for these seminars so that you can sign up via email. Let us know what day and time is best for you so that we can gauge our audience demand. And, always feel free to contact our office if you would like a personal one-on-one consultation.

**If you are interested in learning more about these new developments, please contact our firm at (713) 980-9939 or [admin1@barnett-lawgroup.com](mailto:admin1@barnett-lawgroup.com).**