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January 2014 Barnett Law Group Breaking News

Happy New Year! Our late, late January Newsletter!

2014 Immigration Reform News/H-1B Season President Barack Obama said in his State of the Union address, that it is time to heed the calls to change immigration laws from business and labor leaders, religious leaders and law enforcement officials. The House of Representatives appears poised to take up immigration reform of some type this year. During a news conference on the annual House Republican retreat, Speaker of the House John Boehner said members would be hammering out principles going forward for immigration reform. Republicans have signaled in recent months that they will take up immigration reform in smaller pieces, rather than in one big bill. So, as stated in other newsletters, stay tuned for developments as they occur. In the meantime, employers are reminded that H-1B cap season opens on April 1 and we expect many more petitions to be filed than there are visas available. Employers should prepare now and also investigate whether they may be exempt from the cap. One of our employers has discovered recently that it is cap-exempt!

A Look at 2013 Immigrant Visa Numbers For those of you interested in statistics the State Dept. has issued a breakdown of Immediate Relative visas and Family and Employment Preference visas issued per country and per region for FY 2013. A total of 205,435 immediate relative visas were issued worldwide with Asia and North America issued the most. For Family Preference visas again, of 215,753 visas issued Asia and North America claimed the most. For Employment Preference visas of the 377,022 visas issued again, no surprise here, Asia and North America regions were issued the most visas. Which U.S. Consulate issued the most visas of all posts? Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. These statistics confirm that immigrants from Mexico and Asia will continue to dominate all others.

Immigrants in the News and Not in Good Way By now all of know that Justin Bieber is not a U.S. citizen. Who knew he was an O-1 nonimmigrant? I thought he was from Utah. His recent arrest in Miami means that he better have a good defense attorney in order to remain in the U.S. or obtain new visa.

And, an Indian diplomat has been indicted on criminal charges of lying about how much she paid her nonimmigrant housekeeper and fraudulently obtaining a visa for her. She is expected to leave the U.S.

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