

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JOHN E. FOGARTY
SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND - FOR RELEASE 3/20/61

Congressman John E. Fogarty today introduced in the U. S. House of Representatives a bill to amend the immigration law to permit the easier reunion of separated families.

In a statement on the floor of the House, Mr. Fogarty explained that his bill would achieve this purpose by taking unused quota numbers from areas of the world which did not need them and reassign them to those geographic areas where present quotas fail miserably to meet the need.

The Congressman stated further, "This bill has a two-fold purpose. It is designed to facilitate the reunion of separated families and, at the same time, to benefit a considerable number of skilled immigrants whose services have been determined by the Attorney General to be urgently needed in the United States but who cannot be issued a first preference visa solely because a quota number is unavailable. In recent years the Congress has attacked the problem of backlogged immigration quotas by enacting special legislation which afforded only nominal relief and provided no real remedy for the problem. Quotas of many countries continue to be heavily oversubscribed while other countries, notably Great Britain and Ireland, fail to use their allotted quotas year after year to a very substantial degree. It is estimated that approximately one-third of all authorized quota numbers remain unused at the end of each fiscal year and are consequently discarded. One of the underlying principles of our immigration laws is the preservation of the family unit. The instant bill is intended to give meaning and reality to that principle."

"The problem of backlogged quotas is attributable in large part to the great disparity between the size of quotas proclaimed for certain Northern European countries and the size of quotas proclaimed for all other countries throughout the world. For example, three countries of Northern Europe are assigned 70 per cent of the overall annual quota of 155,000 and the other quota countries, about 100 in number, variously divide the remaining 30 per cent of the overall quota. These quotas were computed under the national origins formula which Congress wrote into the Immigration Act of 1924 and carried forward in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. They range from the minimum quota of 100 per annum to the maximum quota of 65,361 proclaimed for Great Britain and Northern Ireland."

"In addition to bringing families together and hastening the entry of hundreds of skilled aliens, this bill will tend to alleviate the hopeless predicament which faces many prospective immigrants whose chances of ever being reached on the waiting list are extremely remote, particularly the nonpreference immigrant. To the extent that the quota numbers now unused are made available for the issuance of visas to aliens within the preference classes, more numbers will become available for the issuance of visas to aliens in the nonpreference class. The vast majority of refugees fall in the nonpreference category."