

Paying for a Green Card with a Gold Card. Huh?

Article By:

Raymond G. Lahoud

Buying a Green Card? Really? In a recent announcement, President Donald Trump introduced a new immigration initiative termed the “Gold Card” visa program. This proposal aims to offer wealthy foreign nationals a streamlined pathway to U.S. citizenship in exchange for a \$5 million investment. The administration suggests that this program could generate substantial revenue, potentially addressing the national debt, and attract affluent individuals poised to stimulate economic growth.

Replacing the EB-5 Visa Program

The “Gold Card” is designed to supplant the existing EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program. Historically, the EB-5 program required foreign investors to commit \$1,050,000—or \$800,000 in targeted employment areas—to a U.S. business, mandating the creation or preservation of at least ten full-time jobs for American workers. In contrast, the new “Gold Card” proposal eliminates the job creation requirement, focusing solely on the financial investment. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick criticized the EB-5 program for being “full of nonsense, make believe, and fraud,” advocating for the “Gold Card” as a more straightforward and lucrative alternative.

Program Details and Implementation

While the administration has outlined the investment amount, several specifics of the “Gold Card” program remain undefined. Details regarding the vetting process, application procedures, and potential caps on the number of visas issued are yet to be disclosed. The administration has indicated that comprehensive guidelines will be released within the next two weeks.

Economic Implications and Skepticism

President Trump asserts that the “Gold Card” program could attract up to one million investors, potentially generating \$5 trillion in revenue to mitigate the national debt. However, analysts express skepticism about these projections. Historical data from similar programs in countries like the United Kingdom and Australia suggest that demand might be limited to a few hundred applications annually. Additionally, “Gold Card” holders would be subject to U.S. taxes on their global income, which could deter potential applicants.

Legal and Legislative Considerations

The proposal to replace the EB-5 program with the “Gold Card” raises legal questions, as the EB-5 was established by Congress and reauthorized as recently as 2022. Unilaterally terminating or replacing it without legislative approval may face significant legal challenges. Experts suggest that implementing the “Gold Card” program would require new legislation, and it’s uncertain whether the administration plans to seek congressional support or proceed through executive action.

Public and Political Reactions

The “Gold Card” proposal has elicited a range of reactions. Critics argue that it commodifies U.S. citizenship, potentially allowing affluent individuals to bypass traditional immigration pathways. Comedian Jimmy Kimmel mocked the initiative, likening it to a “customer rewards program at a casino” and suggesting it reduces citizenship to a membership in an exclusive club.

Conclusion

The “Gold Card” visa program represents a bold shift in U.S. immigration policy, aiming to leverage foreign wealth to bolster the national economy. As the administration prepares to release more detailed information, the proposal is poised to ignite debates on the ethics, legality, and economic viability of monetizing pathways to citizenship. Stakeholders and policymakers will need to carefully consider the potential benefits and drawbacks as the program moves closer to potential implementation.

© Copyright 2025 Lahoud Law Group, P.C.

National Law Review, Volume XV, Number 79

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/paying-green-card-gold-card-huh>