

Polish citizens traveling to the United States would no longer need visas

WASHINGTON—Today, Congressman Quigley (D-IL) issued the following statement after his provision to extend the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) was included in H.R. 4321, the *Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act*

. The measure would extend the VWP for an additional two years, so that the United States can ultimately make permanent the VWP and extend visa-free travel privileges to Poland.

“Poland is a staunch ally of and great friend to the United States. As a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Trade Organization, Poland has been steadfast in its commitment to freedom and democratic ideals. Eighteen years ago, the Polish government repealed a visa requirement for United States citizens traveling to Poland, and now we must make this diplomatic courtesy a two-way street.

This is especially meaningful to the families of the thriving Polish community in the 5th district, and will make it much easier for their relatives to visit the United States. Poland has done so much for America, and it is our turn to repay this great nation. I am honored that Congressman Gutierrez and the nearly 100 supporters of this bill felt strongly that this provision should be included, and I look forward to working with them to help this bill become law.”

The VWP expired this summer, but Quigley's provision would extend it to June 30, 2011. The Homeland Security Department is currently working on developing plans to modernize the program.

In his first term in Congress, Quigley has emerged as an outspoken advocate for Poland and Polish-Americans. He has spoken on the House floor in support of the inclusion of Poland as a country that may participate in the Visa Waiver Program and also co-sponsored and helped pass a measure to grant honorary citizenship to Polish general Casimir Pulaski. Quigley continues to work with the Polish Embassy in Washington and Polish Ambassador Robert Kupiecki.