



Report on the Secretary's Application of the Discretionary Authority Contained in Section 212(d)(3)(B)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act

Fiscal Year 2023 Report to Congress
February 8, 2024



**Homeland
Security**

*U.S. Citizenship and
Immigration Services*



**Homeland
Security**

Foreword

February 8, 2024

I am pleased to present the following report, “Report on the Secretary’s Application of the Discretionary Authority Contained in Section 212(d)(3)(B)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act,” prepared by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The report provides information on the number of noncitizens on whose behalf the Secretary of Homeland Security, after consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, has determined in his sole unreviewable discretion that section 212(a)(3)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B), shall not apply. Pursuant to congressional requirements, this report is being provided to the following Members of Congress:

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member, House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

The Honorable Jim Risch
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

The Honorable Michael McCaul
Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Gregory Meeks
Ranking Member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Mark E. Green
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Gary C. Peters
Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Rand Paul
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Inquiries relating to this report may be directed to me at (202) 447-5890.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Z. Buetow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Zephranie Buetow
Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs

Executive Summary

This report was prepared in accordance with section 212(d)(3)(B)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B)(ii). As in past reports, it summarizes the total numbers of noncitizens for whom the Secretary of Homeland Security has determined to exercise the discretionary authority provided in INA section 212(d)(3)(B)(i), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B)(i). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) applied 2,085 exemptions to individual applicants during fiscal year (FY) 2023.



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I. Legislative Language

Section 212(d)(3)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B), provides:

(B)(i) The Secretary of State, after consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the Secretary of Homeland Security, after consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, may determine in such Secretary's sole unreviewable discretion that subsection (a)(3)(B) shall not apply with respect to an alien within the scope of that subsection or that subsection (a)(3)(B)(vi)(III) shall not apply to a group within the scope of that subsection, except that no such waiver may be extended to an alien who is within the scope of subsection (a)(3)(B)(i)(II), no such waiver may be extended to an alien who is a member or representative of, has voluntarily and knowingly engaged in or endorsed or espoused or persuaded others to endorse or espouse or support terrorist activity on behalf of, or has voluntarily and knowingly received military-type training from a terrorist organization that is described in subclause (I) or (II) of subsection (a)(3)(B)(vi), and no such waiver may be extended to a group that has engaged in terrorist activity against the United States or another democratic country or that has purposefully engaged in a pattern or practice of terrorist activity that is directed at civilians. Such a determination shall neither prejudice the ability of the United States Government to commence criminal or civil proceedings involving a beneficiary of such a determination or any other person, nor create any substantive or procedural right or benefit for a beneficiary of such a determination or any other person. Notwithstanding any other provision of law (statutory or non-statutory), including section 2241 of Title 28, or any other habeas corpus provision, and sections 1361 and 1651 of such title, no court shall have jurisdiction to review such a determination or revocation except in a proceeding for review of a final order of removal pursuant to section 1252 of this title, and review shall be limited to the extent provided in section 1252(a)(2)(D). The Secretary of State may not exercise the discretion provided in this clause with respect to an alien at any time during which the alien is the subject of pending removal proceedings under section 1229a of this title.

(ii) Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall each provide to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and of the Senate, the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report on the aliens to whom such Secretary has applied clause (i). Within one week of applying clause (i) to a group, the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide a report to such Committees.

II. Data Report

During FY 2023, USCIS applied 2,085 exemptions to individual applicants under the Secretary of Homeland Security's exercises of discretionary authority.¹ All applicants considered for exemptions were subject to a thorough and rigorous security vetting process. USCIS procedures require that the biographic and biometric data of all applicants be screened against a broad array of law enforcement and intelligence community databases that contain information about individuals known to be security threats, including the terrorist watchlist. In addition to rigorous background vetting, the Secretary's discretionary authority is applied only on a case-by case basis after careful review of all factors and after all security checks have cleared.

Of those 2,085 exemptions:

- 30 were for applicants for lawful permanent resident status (Form I-485);
- 48 were for asylum applicants (Form I-589);
- 1,998 were for refugee applicants (Form I-590);
- Two were for beneficiaries of refugee/asylum relative petitions (Form I-730);
- One was processed for Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) (Form I-881); and,
- Six were for applicants for relief from removal before the U.S. Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR).

Regarding the reasons for the 2,085 exemptions:

- 906 were processed for an individual's provision of material support, while under duress, to an undesignated terrorist organization as defined in INA section 212(a)(3)(B)(vi)(III), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B)(vi)(III) (Tier III organizations), under the Secretary's February 26, 2007, exercise of authority relating to undesignated terrorist organizations;
- 667 were processed for an individual's provision of material support, while under duress, to a designated terrorist organization as defined in INA section 212(a)(3)(B)(vi)(I) and (II), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(3)(B)(vi)(I) and (II) (Tier I or II organizations), under the Secretary's April 27, 2007, exercise of authority relating to designated terrorist organizations;
- 15 were processed for an individual's receipt of military-type training, while under duress, from a terrorist organization, under the Secretary's January 7, 2011, exercise of authority relating to Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III terrorist organizations;
- 12 were processed for an individual's voluntary provision of medical care to members of a terrorist organization, without assisting in the violent activities of an organization or individual, under the Secretary's October 13, 2011, exercise of authority relating to Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III terrorist organizations;

¹ An applicant may receive a TRIG exemption for a specific adjudication based on more than one exemption category, such that the number of exemptions granted may be higher than the number of applicants or adjudications impacted.

- 189 were processed for individuals who provided certain limited material support (including certain routine commercial transactions, certain routine social transactions, certain humanitarian assistance, or material support provided under substantial pressure that does not rise to the level of duress) to a Tier III terrorist organization, or to a member of such an organization, under the Secretary’s February 5, 2014, exercise of authority;
- 59 were processed for individuals who provided insignificant material support to a Tier III terrorist organization, or to a member of such an organization, under the Secretary’s February 5, 2014, exercise of authority;
- 12 were provided for Afghan allies who supported U.S. interests and/or participated in the resistance movement against the Taliban, or against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, under the Secretary’s June 8, 2022, exercise of authority;
- 48 were provided for certain individuals who were employed as civil servants in Afghanistan at any time from September 27, 1996, to December 22, 2001, or from August 15, 2021, or thereafter, under the Secretary’s June 8, 2022, exercise of authority;
- 152 were processed for individuals who provided certain limited material support (including certain routine commercial transactions, certain routine social transactions, certain humanitarian assistance, or material support provided under substantial pressure that does not rise to the level of duress), or insignificant material support to a Tier I or II terrorist organization, or to a member of such an organization, under the Secretary’s June 8, 2022, exercise of authority;
- Four were processed under the Limited General Exemption² for certain qualified individuals with existing immigration benefits who provided material support to, solicited funds for, solicited individuals for membership in, or received military-type training from certain qualified Tier III terrorist organizations,³ under the Secretary’s August 10, 2012, exercise of authority relating to certain Tier III terrorist organizations;
- 19 were processed under group-based exemptions for individuals who had certain activities or affiliations with specific groups which the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, has approved for consideration of an exemption;
- Two were processed for an Individual Exemption under the discretionary authority of the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary of State, in consultation with one another and the Attorney General, as specified at INA section 212(d)(3)(B)(i), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(3)(B)(i).

² Qualified individuals under the Limited General Exemption are those who were granted certain immigration benefits in the United States, other than a nonimmigrant visa, on or before August 10, 2012, and who are not in removal proceedings or subject to a final order of removal, unless the individual is the beneficiary of a Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition. The Limited General Exemption does not apply to applicants for refugee or asylum status.

³ Tier III terrorist organizations eligible for the Limited General Exemption are those that have never: (1) targeted U.S. interests or persons, including planned or attempted attacks on U.S. interests or persons; (2) engaged in a pattern or practice of torture, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2441(d)(1)(A), genocide, as described in 18 U.S.C. § 1091(a), or the use of child soldiers, as described in 18 U.S.C. § 2442; (3) have been identified in either Executive Order 13224, as amended, or otherwise designated by the Secretary of State or the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to the Specially Designated Nationals List, or in lists established by United Nations Security Council Committee pursuant to Resolutions 1267 (1999) or 1988 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities; or, (4) been previously designated or are currently designated as a Tier I or Tier II terrorist organization, as described in sections 212(a)(3)(B)(vi)(I) or (II) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(3)(B)(vi)(I) or (II).

More information on the situational exemptions and group-based exemptions that have been authorized to date is available online.⁴

Exemptions by Type and Application Type

FY 2023 Exemption Type by Application Type

Exemption	Application Type (Number of Exemptions per Application Type)
Group-based exemption – related to All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF)	I-590 (2)
Group-based exemption – related to Arakan Army	I-590 (1)
Group-based exemption – related to Farabundo Martí para la Liberación National (FMLN)	I-485 (2) I-589 (1) I-590 (4)
Group-based exemption – related to the Tigray People’s Liberations Front (TPLF)	I-589 (1) EOIR (1)
Group-based exemption – related to Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA)	I-590 (4)
Group-based exemption – related to Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)	I-590 (1)
Group-based exemption – related to Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)	I-590 (2)
Limited General Exemption	I-485 (4)
Exemption for Afghan Allies	I-485 (2) I-589 (4) I-590 (6)
Exemption for Afghan Civil Servants	I-589 (3) I-590 (45)
Exemption for Certain Limited Material Support (Tier III Organization)	I-881 (1) I-485 (3) I-589 (2) I-590 (183)
Exemption for Certain Limited or Insignificant Material Support (Tier I or II Organization)	I-589 (3) I-590 (149)
Exemption for Insignificant Material Support (Tier III Organization)	I-485 (9) I-589 (1) I-590 (49)
Exemption for Material Support Under Duress to Tier I or II Organization	I-730 (1) I-485 (2) I-589 (22)

⁴ <https://www.uscis.gov/laws-and-policy/other-resources/terrorism-related-inadmissibility-grounds-trig/terrorism-related-inadmissibility-grounds-exemptions>.

	I-590 (641) EOIR (1)
Exemption for Material Support Under Duress to Tier III Organization	I-730 (1) I-485 (7) I-589 (8) I-590 (887) EOIR (3)
Exemption for Medical Care	I-589 (3) I-590 (9)
Exemption for Receipt of Military Type Training Under Duress from Tier I, II, or III Organization	I-485 (1) I-590 (13) EOIR (1)
Individual Secretarial Exemption	I-590 (2)
TOTAL EXEMPTIONS	2,085