



## **BACKGROUND**

### **Origin of Cuba Adjustment Act (CAA)**

#### **Intent and Debate- 1966- HR 15183**

##### **Congressman Michael Feighan (D-OH)**

*“The bill under consideration will simply permit a refugee from Cuba in the United States to obtain permanent resident status without the necessity of physically leaving and reentering the United States.”*

*“The granting of permanent resident status would further American policy objectives: by further demonstrating the desire of the United States to play a full and sympathetic role as a country of asylum to refugees from communism.”*

*“The fact that the United States no longer maintains diplomatic relations with Cuba has resulted in the inability of refugees to obtain immigrant visas in Cuba and has necessitated the parole of Cuban refugees into the United States.”*

##### **Congressman Dante Fascell (D-FL)**

*“The theory behind excluding western hemisphere natives from the benefits of adjustment of status procedure is that they can return to their native countries to obtain an immigrant visa more easily than aliens from outside the western hemisphere. This theory...does not apply to natives of Cuba since they could not obtain a visa if they did return to Cuba.”*

##### **Congressman Claude Pepper (D-FL)**

*“I wish to commend the committee...to provide this humanitarian aid for these people fleeing from Communist persecution and tyranny under Castro toward establishing permanent residence in our country.”*

**Congressman William Ryan (D-NY)**

*“We will pass the legislation because, among other reasons, Cubans cannot adjust their status without leaving the country.”*

*“More than 300,000 refugees from Cuba have come to these shores since January 1, 1959. However, the severance of U.S. diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba on January 3, 1961 has made it impossible for a Cuban to apply for an immigrant visa since that date.”*

**Congressman Arch Moore (D-WV)**

*“When President Johnson signed the 1965 immigration act at the statue of liberty, he proclaimed a welcome for all those who would flee from Castro-but he spoke of the day when they would return to a homeland cleansed of terror and free from fear.”*

*“Cuban refugees obviously are unable to apply in Cuba for a visa since we have no U.S. consulate there.”*

**Congressman Jacob Gilbert (D-NY)**

*“The fact remains that these people here; they left Cuba because of the upheaval and chose, often at great risk, the United States for freedom and protection.”*

**Congressman Peter Rodino (D-NJ)**

*“This legislation, will permit the refugees from Cuba to apply, if they so elect, for permanent residence in the United States, clearly demonstrates once again the compassion that the United States has, and always had had, for those persecuted people who must leave their native countries to seek precious freedom.”*

*“The Cubans have demonstrated to the world, by leaving the Communist state of Cuba, their distaste for that form of government. The Cubans have proved to the world that they look to the United States as the land of freedom....The bill simply and expressly relieves the Cuban refugee of the burden of leaving the United States to secure an immigrant visa abroad... The refugees have left their homes, and in most cases all of their possessions in Cuba, but they come to this country with hope and industry.”*