

Trump's \$5 Million “Gold Card” Visa: What it Means for EB-5 Investors

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President Donald Trump recently announced a proposed “Gold Card” visa, sparking speculation about its potential impact on the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program. While details remain unclear, this proposal raises important questions for current and prospective EB-5 investors. Here’s what you need to know.

What is the “Gold Card” Visa?

The Gold Card visa would offer U.S. permanent residency to individuals investing \$5 million in the country. The proposed program is modeled after similar international investor visa initiatives, such as Dubai’s Golden Visa. Key details include:

- **Investment Requirement:** The program would require a \$5 million investment—substantially higher than the EB-5 program’s minimum of \$800,000.
- **Pathway to Citizenship:** This visa would offer high-net-worth individuals a streamlined route to U.S. citizenship.
- **Potential Economic Impact:** The Trump administration aims to attract a million investors, potentially raising \$5 trillion in revenue.
- **Geopolitical Considerations:** Given that over 60% of EB-5 investors come from China, some speculate this is a strategic response to U.S.-China tensions.

Can the “Gold Card” Replace EB-5?

Initial reports suggested that the Gold Card visa might replace EB-5. The Commerce Secretary even indicated this intention, while the president hinted that companies could use the Gold Card to purchase legal permanent residence for employees. However, eliminating the EB-5 program is easier said than done:

- **Congressional Authorization:** The EB-5 program is authorized by Congress through at least September 30, 2027. Any attempt to dismantle it would require congressional approval, which is unlikely given past legislative support.
- **2022 EB-5 Reform & Integrity Act:** This act reinforced protections for investors, ensuring that those who file before September 30, 2026, will be grandfathered into the current system.
- **Legislative Hurdles:** Introducing a new visa category requires congressional approval. Lawmakers benefiting from EB-5 investments in their states may resist any changes that could reduce economic contributions to their regions.

Key Challenges and Concerns

While the Gold Card visa has captured attention, several uncertainties remain:

- **Realistic Demand:** Expecting one million investors to each contribute \$5 million seems highly optimistic, given that the EB-5 program has attracted only about 70,000 applicants over the past 30 years.
- **Tax Implications:** There is speculation that Gold Card holders might avoid U.S. global taxation, which could raise legal and policy concerns.
- **Coexistence with EB-5:** Rather than replacing EB-5, the Gold Card visa is more likely to exist alongside it, targeting a different investor demographic.

What This Means for EB-5 Investors

The key takeaways for those currently navigating the EB-5 process is that EB-5 remains intact and legally protected.

- **Current EB-5 Investors:** Your investment remains secure, and your path to a green card is unchanged. Thanks to legislative safeguards, your petition will continue to be processed.
- **Prospective Investors:** If you're considering EB-5, filing before September 30, 2026, ensures your investment is protected under the program's grandfathering provisions.

The Bottom Line

While Trump's Gold Card proposal has generated interest, its viability is uncertain. The EB-5 program remains a structured and legally protected pathway to U.S. permanent residency. Investors should stay informed but proceed with confidence in EB-5's stability. For those looking to secure U.S. residency, now is the time to act before the 2026 grandfathering deadline.