

Statement on the Technical Intern Training Act & the Enforcement of its Basic Policy

In November 2016, the incumbent Congress approved to pass the Technical Intern Training Act. We issue this “Statement on the Enactment of the Law” to express our views on the part of the Act that says “The technical intern training, while being maintained of its basic structure, will be improved through external regulations, and the system will at the same time be expanded. However, due to certain regulational flaws, it is not possible to gauge the factors leading to the improvements.”

Following this move of the Congress, after the Public Comment session held last April 7, ordinance and notice regarding this Act were issued, specifying regulation enforcement and basic policy for this Act.

In our previously issued statement, we expressed our concerns regarding the expansion of the intern training system. Unfortunately, the expansion still takes place.

Specifically, most of the expansion measures are mainly specified in the ordinance, but the increase in number of trainees is specified in the White Paper. According to the description in the White Paper, the increase in number of intern received, described to be ‘approximately twice as many,’ specified in article 16 of the regulation bill, will exceed the number of permanent staff of receiving companies. For example, a company with a size of “41 to 50 full-time staff” can take up to 60 trainees in 5 years’ time; a company of “31 to 40 full time staff” 48 trainees; a company of “6 to 30” can take up to 36 trainees.

As such, the system is more of a labor policy rather than a skill transfer system. If the objectives of the whole program are to be achieved, at least it should be mandated that the number of accepted trainees must not exceed the number of full-time staff at that receiving company.

Also, the criteria to judge the transition to category 3 (“excellent” in this case) is by nature very dubious, which, we are afraid, might give rise to reckless expansion in the number of trainees.

Specifically, to determine whether a company is “excellent” in its practice, a point system is in place, one criterion of which is the passing rate of the basic skill test. If over 95% of interns pass it, the company gets 20 points; 80 to below 95%, 10 points; 75% to below 85%, 0 points.

However, the passing rates are often over 99% in the first place. The passing rates of 95% then do not make a very good judging criterion of how well the company performs. The point system therefore should be adequately revamped.

It is unacceptable that the expansion goes into effect despite these persisting problems. The expansion should go into practice only after these problems have been properly addressed.

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NPO - Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan

Network for Rights of Foreign Technical Trainees