

## Trump's \$5M 'Gold Card' Visa Plan Faces Legal, Political Hurdles

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In the early weeks of his presidency, Donald Trump made headlines with a bold promise: a fast lane for wealthy immigrants to gain legal status in the United States by paying \$5 million. This initiative, popularly dubbed the “Trump Card,” was introduced with much fanfare. Trump even revealed a prototype, a gold, credit card–style green card featuring his face, that he said would be ready within two weeks.

The idea behind the Trump Card was straightforward: wealthy foreign investors could essentially buy a shortcut to a U.S. green card, replacing the existing EB-5 visa program.

The EB-5 program grants green cards to investors who put at least \$800,000 to \$1.05 million into American businesses and create a minimum of 10 jobs. While the program has raised billions of dollars, critics say it's been poorly managed and inefficient.

Treasury Secretary Howard Lutnick, who spoke about the Trump Card earlier this year, explained that selling 200,000 of these cards could generate up to \$1 trillion to help reduce the national debt. However, the proposal has raised a number of legal and political questions.

For one, creating a new visa category like the Trump Card requires legislation; the president alone can't just make it happen. Immigration experts have been quick to point out that such a move would almost certainly face lawsuits and legal challenges. The current immigration laws that define visa categories haven't changed since 1990, and attempting to bypass Congress could be seen as an overreach of presidential power.

Additionally, the Trump Card proposal includes another controversial element: it would exempt holders from paying federal income tax on income earned outside the United States. This tax exemption raises separate constitutional concerns, as changing tax law also requires congressional action.

Despite these challenges, the idea captured attention. By June, more than 70,000 people had signed up on a website set up by the White House for more information about the card. Still, it's uncertain how many of those interested would apply or qualify. Many wealthy individuals already live in the U.S., and while millions outside the country have significant wealth, only a small fraction meet the \$5 million threshold.

Experts also suggest that demand for the Trump Card would mostly come from wealthy individuals in regions like China and the Middle East, where many ultra-rich live. Yet skepticism remains high. Legal advisors, immigration attorneys, and scholars alike question whether the administration could pull this off without Congress or if the courts would block the plan entirely.

In short, the Trump Card remains a flashy but uncertain proposal. While it promises a new revenue source and a shortcut for the rich to gain legal status, its path is riddled with constitutional questions and political hurdles. Whether it ever becomes more than a bold idea remains to be seen.

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