

**Chair Lofgren's Statement for the Record**  
**H.R. 631, For the Relief of Arpita Kurdekar, Girish Kurdekar, and**  
**Vandana Kurdekar**  
**October 29, 2019**

Arpita Kurdekar arrived in the United States in August 2014 on an F-1 student visa in pursuit of a master's degree in civil engineering. In September 2016, she was hit by a tree limb and suffered a severe spinal cord injury. She was instantly paralyzed. Although Arpita had already been in the United States for more than two years at the time of her injury, she never could have imagined the circumstances under which she would remain in this country for years to come.

Arpita is now readjusting to life with the aid of her loving parents, Girish and Vandana, who came to the United States shortly after her accident. Together, they are now Arpita's full-time caregivers and biggest supporters. Although Arpita remains on a student visa and is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Connecticut, and her parents have been able to extend their B-2 status several times, all three lack options to remain in the United States long-term.

If the family returns to their home country of India, where access to the specialized treatment required to manage Arpita's condition and sustain her quality of life is limited (and very costly), they will undoubtedly experience excessive hardship.

For years, the Subcommittee has agreed, on a bipartisan basis, to move private bills where the beneficiary would experience hardship and deterioration of a serious medical condition if they were to return to their home country. This is, without a doubt, one of those cases. Arpita came to the United States in pursuit of an advanced education. Despite the challenges she faces as a result of her paralysis, she has continued to pursue her goals and is moving closer to her PhD every day.

The United States is where Arpita suffered a tragic accident that changed the course of her life. And it is the best place for her and her family to remain—so that she can continue to receive the best care and treatment in the world.

Requesting a report from ICE is the first step in pursuing permanent relief for a family that has risen to the challenge of an unimaginable reality. I am hopeful that the Subcommittee will—on a bipartisan basis—take this first step in providing relief for this very compelling and worthy case.