

# Top 10 users of H-1B guest worker program are offshore outsourcing firms

By RON HIRA

The H-1B 'non-immigrant' temporary foreign guest worker program is called a valuable tool for employers to attract and retain the "best and brightest" immigrants in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields. Because employers may petition for permanent residence for their H-1B employees, the visa is sometimes described as a "bridge to immigration" that will keep the smartest foreign STEM workers in the U.S. permanently and thus improve the nation's competitiveness.

In part, that's how senators Orin Hatch (R-Utah), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Chris Coons (R-DeI.), and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), explain their new bill — known as the "I-Squared Act" — that would more than quadruple the size of the H-1B program (to 300,000).

[The U.S. currently makes 85,000 H-1B visas available annually, but more can be approved for operations with exemptions, such as universities and non-profit research organizations. In fiscal year 2012, for instance, 134,780 H-1B petition requests were approved.]

However, for the biggest users of the

program, this view is false: In 2012, the 10 employers receiving the largest number of H-1B visas were all in the business of outsourcing and offshoring high-tech American jobs. Many of the jobs that went to H-1B workers should have instead gone to U.S. workers, but employers are not required to recruit them before applying for an H-1B, and can even replace their U.S. workers with H-1Bs.

The top 10 H-1B employers were granted an astonishing 40,170 visas; nearly half the total annual quota. There are two reasons these firms hire H-1Bs instead of Americans: 1) an H-1B worker can legally be paid less than a U.S. worker in the same occupation and locality;

2) the H-1B worker learns the job and then rotates back to the home country and takes the work with him. That's why the H-1B was dubbed the "Outsourcing Visa" by the former Commerce Minister of India, Kamal Nath.

Rather than keeping jobs from leaving our shores, the H-1B does the opposite, by facilitating offshoring and providing employers with cheap, temporary labor — while reducing job opportunities for American high-tech workers in the process.

The I-Squared Act does nothing to protect against this, while vastly expanding the size of a deeply flawed program that accelerates the offshoring of American high-tech jobs and reduces America's future capacity to innovate.

## H-1B visa approvals

Company	2012	2011
Cognizant	9281	5095
Tata	7469	1659
Infosys	5600	3360
Wipro	4304	2803
Accenture	4037	1304
HCL America	2070	930
Mahindra Group (incl Satyam)	1963	404
IBM	1846	987
Larsen & Toubro	1832	1156
Deloitte	1668	798

Employers with the most new H-1B visa application approvals in fiscal year 2012. Source: Computerworld analysis of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service data. Some company divisions were combined, such as IBM Corp. and IBM India, Tata consulting and engineering groups, etc.

(Editor's Note: Ron Hira is a research associate for the Economic Policy Institute.)

## Fishing derby for Guide Dogs May 4

The third annual Salmon Fishing Derby will be held Saturday, May 4, on the docks at RiverPlace Marina, behind the RiverPlace Hotel in downtown Portland. The event, sponsored by Machinists District W24, is a fundraiser for Guide Dogs of America (GDA).

The International Association of Machinists founded GDA in 1948 in Sylmar, California, to train and provide guide dogs to the blind, free of charge. The organization receives no government funding. To breed, raise and train one guide dog costs \$38,000.

In two years, the Machinists District W24 derby has raised \$24,000.

Entry is \$200 per person, with a limit of four anglers per boat. Boats are staffed with professional fishing guides. This year a limited number of anglers can use their own boats. Registration is \$100 per angler.

Prizes are awarded for biggest fish and most fish landed. Following the derby there will be a luncheon and raffle.

The deadline to register is April 5.

Sponsorship space also is available, ranging from \$100 for a Bronze sponsor all the way to \$1,500 for a Diamond sponsor.

For more information or to register, go to [www.iamw24.org](http://www.iamw24.org) or email [communicator@iamw24.org](mailto:communicator@iamw24.org).

## ...Immigration reform links labor, U.S. Chamber

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1. An independent commission to assess and manage future immigration, based on labor market shortages that are determined on the basis of actual need;
2. A secure and effective worker authorization mechanism;
3. Rational operational control of the border;
4. Adjustment of status for the current undocumented population; and
5. Improvement, not expansion, of temporary worker programs.

Bearing those principles in mind, labor leaders met with representatives of

the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in January and February to discuss how to fix immigration in a way that benefits both workers and employers, with a focus on less-skilled occupations. "American workers should have a first crack at available jobs," said U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Thomas Donohue and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka in their Feb. 21 joint statement. But in instances when employers are not able to fill job openings with American workers, they said, businesses should be able to hire foreign workers while fully protecting the wages and working conditions of U.S. and immigrant workers.

"Among other things, this requires a new kind of worker visa program that does not keep all workers in a permanent temporary status, provides labor mobility in a way that still gives American workers a first shot at available

jobs, and that automatically adjusts as the American economy expands and contracts," the joint statement said.

On Feb. 19, the Oregon AFL-CIO held a press conference outside the U.S. immigration office in Northwest Portland. As a show of unity, Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain stood alongside Francisco Lopez of the immigrant rights group CAUSA, Brenda Mendoza of the farmworker advocacy group PCUN, and Hugo Nicolas, an undocumented immigrant from Mexico who was brought by his parents to the United States at age 11. Chamberlain said the Oregon labor movement has spent the last 18 months building relationships with immigrants rights organizations.

"Immigration reform is a family issue, it's a workers issue, and it's an American issue," Chamberlain said. "We are not a nation that treats people as second class citizens. We're not a nation that allows an immigration policy that allows for the exploitation of workers. That's not what this country's about."

On March 5, the Oregon AFL-CIO Executive Board will consider a resolution calling on Congress to pass "common-sense immigration reform" reflecting the AFL-CIO and Change to Win federation joint principles, and committing the Oregon AFL-CIO to communicate that position to Oregon's congressional delegation.



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