



## Bush's good news for H-1B aspirants

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As George W Bush waits for John Kerry to concede, and the latter waits for the Ohio results, Indians can start working out what the 109th Congress would mean for them on crucial issues of non-immigrant visas — skilled worker (H-1B), intra company transfer (L-1).

However, there is no clear cut answer as to which way the Congress will view bills that restrict immigration.

As far as sponsors of bills which sought to make changes in the H-1B and L-1 visa programmes go, they are back in Congress. Representative John Mica, who proposed changes in the L-1 programme, ran unopposed.

Representative Tom Tancredo from Colorado, who introduced bills to scrap the H-1B programme, is also back in the House of Representatives.

So also, representative Rosa DeLauro (Democrat-Connecticut), representative Nancy Johnson (Republican-Connecticut), representative Henry Hyde (Republican-Illinois) and senator Christopher Dodd (Democrat Connecticut) are back.

But Indians, who are looking to go to the US on non-immigrant work and student visas, should watch out for senators like Charles Schumer from New York.

Senator Schumer voted for increasing number of H-1B foreign workers in 1998; however in '00, he voted to bring the cap down. Likewise, he voted to end the foreign nurses programme in 1996.

Further, senator Johnny Isakson from Georgia voted for bills, which led to blocking of portions of the annual H-1B cap for workers from Singapore and Chile.

**On the positive side is newly-elected John Thune from South Dakota, who upstaged minority leader Tom Daschle. He voted in favour of increasing the annual H-1B cap.**

**Senator Thune, in a move that can be seen as pro-corporate America, voted against the Watt amendment, which would have forbidden US firms from using temporary foreign workers to replace Americans.**