

May 27, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-107 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madame Speaker and Mr. Leader:

We write to express our strong objection to bringing to the House floor any time in the remaining days of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress legislation to increase temporary foreign worker visas, skilled or unskilled.

You well know and appreciate the economic hard times all American families and workers are facing. Inflation, particularly in food and fuel, is inflicting severe strains on every working family in America, most of whom have seen their real wages decline. Unemployment is rising and threatens Americans at every skill level, in most sectors of the economy.

Yet, callous special interests continue to push Congress to increase foreign worker visas. Why would anybody who cares about the welfare of working American families seek government favors in the form of more temporary visas?

It strikes us as the height of arrogance and living out of touch with real America to push for more visas. We urge you to put the national interest as it relates to American working families, both skilled and unskilled, ahead of special interests seeking another form of corporate welfare.

As you are well aware, high-tech interests constantly claim that they need more H1B visas in order to recruit the world's "best and brightest." However, their claim is false.

A new report from the University of California, Davis titled "H1B: Still Not the Best and the Brightest" finds that H1B foreign workers are actually "ordinary talent doing ordinary work." Most H1B workers fill entry-level jobs, with only 11 percent in positions the Department of Labor classifies as requiring the highest level of talent. And most don't even work for American companies. Indeed, 80 percent of H1B visas in 2007 went to India-based companies. This leaves American companies — which might have a narrow, legitimate need for a specific, highly skilled foreign worker — short when the 65,000 H1B visas are allotted. These companies should be lobbying for better rules, not more visas.

Likewise, H2B visas for unskilled foreign workers are even less justifiable than the H1B push. First, their lack of education and skills ensures that these workers compete for jobs directly with the most vulnerable Americans. Census figures show that in 2007 foreign workers held more than one-fifth of the jobs in building cleaning, construction, forestry and fishing, and 15 percent of food service jobs. Notably, native-

born unemployment levels in these fields (even before the current recession) have been double the overall national unemployment rate.

By flooding the lower-end labor market, foreign workers have enabled employers to pay people less — in other words, to privatize the benefits of foreign-born workers while socializing their costs. An increasing number of studies show that less educated Americans, and especially minorities, suffer the most from competition with foreign labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures indicate that, before the recession, 14 million working-age Americans who were seeking a job couldn't secure a full-time job; 40 percent of adult black males lacked employment.

Importantly, about 40 percent of illegal immigration is due to visa overstays. It would be irresponsible to increase temporary visas and widen the exposure to this avenue for illegal immigration at this time and without addressing vulnerabilities that give rise to fraud and abuse.

Finally, it is as bad to enable "insourcing" of foreign workers who displace Americans as is "outsourcing" American jobs overseas. In fact, insourcing via H1B, H2B, and other temporary worker visas is arguably worse, because it imposes a hidden tax on Americans, who effectively subsidize foreign workers and their employers.

Therefore, we strongly oppose any legislation that increases temporary work visas of any kind, in any manner, including exemptions from visa category caps. Please side with American workers and their families, and turn aside the reckless appeals of corporate special interests.

Thank you for giving our views serious consideration.

Sincerely,

NumbersUSA	American Engineering Association
U.S. Business and Industry Council	Programmers Guild
BrainSavers.org	Californians for Population Stabilization
Eagle Forum	JobDestruction.info
The Conservative Caucus	Americans for Better Immigration
Team America PAC	AnAmericanScam.com
ZaZona.com	American Family Association
National Voters Alliance	Americans for Immigration Control
Communications Workers of America Local 4250	
Federation for American Immigration Reform	
American Council for Immigration Reform	
U.S. Immigration Reform Political Action Committee	

cc: Republican Leader John Boehner  
 Republican Whip Roy Blunt  
 Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid  
 Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell