

<<<<< JOB DESTRUCTION NEWSLETTER No. 1824 -- 2/27/2008 >>>>>

Ephraim Schwartz wrote an editorial yesterday bemoaning the fact that 19 debates have gone by without a single question about the H-1B issue. After last night's debate, that number goes up to 20 debates!

Did you notice that in last night's presidential debate the topic of immigration was avoided, except for Obama briefly complaining that Clinton's touch back provision for guest workers wasn't effective? I'm Not sure what Obama had in mind, but presumably he just wants guest workers to stay here forever until they get amnesty.

In 90 minutes of debate, this is all that was said about the topic of immigration.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/26/us/politics/26text-debate.html>

Clinton, McCain and Obama on H-1B visas

By Ephraim Schwartz

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With the deadline for H-1B visa applications fast approaching -- April 1, 2008 for 2009 work permits -- you would think one of the three major presidential candidates would be talking about this issue.

And, frankly with 19 debates for the Democrats and almost as many for the Republicans, I don't recall one question from one reporter asking any of these presidential candidates where they stand on the H-1B visa cap and whether or not they want to see it increased, decreased or remain the same.

You will also be hard pressed to find any statements pro or con on any of the three candidates official Web sites on the issue of H-1B. In fact a search found no comments whatsoever despite the fact that all three have links to "issues" and where they stand.

So, with the help of Kim Berry, president of the Programmers Guild, I came up with the following:

A YouTube moment with Hillary Clinton plus two sites, an interview between Barack Obama and TechCrunch's Michael Arrington, and an eWeek news story by Roy Mark that quotes McCain.

When you do read the full statements in context you will see that the premise of all three is based on the belief that there is a skills shortage in the United States.

None talk about the H-1B visa being used as a tactic to hire workers at wages lower than the prevailing market. Rather they imply once the skills shortage of American workers is closed then they would review the H-1B program.

I strongly suggest you go to the sites to get the full import of what they said lest I be accused of taking their words out of context.

So, without further ado, and as a public service, here are the candidates statements on H-1B visas.

Hillary Clinton

"I also want to reaffirm my commitment to the H-1B visa program and to increase the current cap. Foreign skilled workers contribute greatly to our technological development. That is well understood in Silicon Valley."

John McCain

"I will continue to support H-1B visas, but, I'm telling you, the American peoples priority is, either rightly or wrongly, and we live in a democracy, is that we secure the borders first."

Barack Obama

"We can do better than that and go a long way toward meeting industry's need for skilled workers with Americans. Until we have achieved that, I will support a temporary increase in the H-1B visa program as a stop gap measure until we can reform our immigration system comprehensively."

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