

FIIDS urges USCIS to Urgently extend H1B Grace period to 180 days

As Time Is Running Out for laid off H1Bs, FIIDS urges USCIS to extend H1b Grace period to 180 days to retain competitive edge and avoid impact on families

WASHINGTON DC, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, USA, March 18, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As Time Is Running Out for laid off H1B professionals, [Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies](#)(FIIDS) requests the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to Urgently consider extending Grace period to 180 days



Over ~250,000+ have been laid off in the USA since Oct 2022 and this number is growing with companies like Meta announcing another set of tens of thousands of layoffs. A large number of these professionals are tax-paying H1B immigrants(estimated 100,000), particularly from India, who need to leave the US if they cannot find another employer filing for their H1b in 60 days. This has a humanitarian impact on them as their families, including their US born children are uprooted abruptly, and those who laid off in the earlier months are not running out of time.

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Time is running out for laid off professionals to stay legally in the US, the USCIS needs to urgently extend their grace period to avoid humanitarian impact and also to retain US competitive edge”

Khanderao Kand

FIIDS also discussed with tech executives, startup leaders and venture capitalists, who supported this humanitarian need, noted that these highly skilled laid off STEM/tech professionals are important for maintaining the US

competitive advantage in the world, especially in the emerging technologies like, AI and Cyber security. As Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and Anna Eshoo called out in their letter to USCIS, departure of STEM professionals from the US is also a national security threat.

FIIDS has been working on creating awareness and appealed to the President of the United

States, the secretary of Department of Homeland Security(DHS) and director of United States Commission on Immigration Services (USCIS) to extend the grace period to 6 months to year on humanitarian grounds as well as to stop a brain drain of this STEM professionals to retain the US competitive edge on emerging technologies against China.

As a part of awareness and policy engagement, the FIIDS launched a media campaign in Jan 2023 creating awareness about this issue as covered in tens of media both India and the US. Subsequently in February 2023, FIIDS also launched a Change petition that received ~2600 sign-ups in a week.

FIIDS reached out to elected representatives, many of them Zoe Lofgren, Anna Eshoo, Ro Khanna, Shri Thanedar, and Raja Krishnamurthy are also supportive of the extension.

FIIDS discussed the impact with various organizations and expressed gratitude support from US India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), US India Business Council (USIBC), American Jewish Committee (AJC), TIE (The Indus Entrepreneurs) South California, and the American Association on Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPIO).

FIIDS thanks the Senate majority leader Senator Chuck Schumer that this issue can be fixed by an administrative process in his discussion with Indian American leaders on a recent call on March 13th. FIIDS applaud the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) for the discussion and support for this extension in their meeting on March 14.

Even though the USCIS is positively considering the extension, it is yet to be done and the time is running out for the tech professionals. FIIDS appeals to the USCIS, and DHS to consider a request to expedite the extension of grace period. FIIDS also appeals to the elected officials, tech executives, and community leaders to emphasize the need and urgency to increase the grace period.

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