

How to Preserve the Spirit of H1B Reform While Protecting Innovation

Entrepreneur Maury Blackman praises administration's reform goals while urging leadership to carve out exceptions that allows startups to access global talent.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, September 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Technology entrepreneur and author [Maury Blackman](#) today praised the administration's effort to reform the H1B visa program while warning that the newly announced \$100,000 annual fee could unintentionally stifle American innovation unless an exception is created for startups and smaller technology companies.

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“The administration deserves credit for tackling a difficult issue head-on,” said Blackman. “Protecting American jobs and addressing abuse in the H1B program are vital

priorities. But treating a three-million-dollar startup the same as a trillion-dollar corporation will have unintended consequences. Big Tech can absorb this fee with ease. Startups cannot. Without an exception, we risk choking off the very innovation that keeps America competitive.”

Startups operate on lean budgets, often raising just a few million dollars in early funding to cover salaries, product development, and customer acquisition. An added \$100,000 per engineer each year is not sustainable. Larger corporations, with vast cash reserves, will continue hiring globally, while smaller firms may be forced to move jobs offshore, scale back, or close altogether.

Blackman emphasized that startups are not exploiting the visa system to cut costs. They rely on H1B visas to access highly specialized skills—roles in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, and biotechnology—where American talent is in short supply. “This is not about bypassing American workers,” Blackman explained. “It is about filling roles where there simply are not enough qualified candidates in the domestic market.”

To address these challenges, Blackman is calling for a targeted startup exception. Such an exception could be tied to revenue thresholds, employee headcount, or narrowly defined technical occupations where shortages are well documented. This approach would preserve the administration's goal of protecting American workers while ensuring young companies are not strangled by costs they cannot bear.

“This is not about weakening reform—it is about strengthening it,” Blackman said. “By carving out an exception for startups, policymakers can safeguard American jobs and protect American innovation at the same time.”

History underscores the importance of this balance. More than half of America’s billion-dollar startups were founded or co-founded by immigrants. Companies like Google, Tesla, and Intel exist today because the United States welcomed global talent. “If we close that door now, the next Google or Tesla will not be built in San Francisco or Boston,” Blackman warned. “It will be built in Toronto, Berlin, or Shanghai.”

Read the full article:

About Maury Blackman

Maury Blackman is a technology entrepreneur, investor, and author with more than 25 years of leadership experience in high-growth companies. He has scaled businesses to hundreds of millions in revenue, led multiple venture-backed firms, and is currently focused on building platforms at the intersection of technology, transparency, and innovation.

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