

# AMERICAN ENGINEER™

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— *Of Engineers, By Engineers and For Engineers* —

## ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY QUADRUPLES CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONGRESSMEN

***High Tech Industry Spent  
38 M\$ in Political Contributions  
plus over 90 M\$ in Lobbying  
for Year 2000 Election Cycle***

By DAMON SCOTT

21 April 2000 — The Center for Responsive Politics reports that the Industry "Computers/Internet" contributed 38.7 million dollars to Congressional campaigns for the year 2000 election, up from 9.5 million dollars in 1998, causing its rank in congressional contributions to rise from 25<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>.

The entire sector "Communications/Electronics" contributed 129.5 million dollars toward having its interests heard in Congress, thus being the fourth largest sector, behind Finance/ Insurance/ Real-Estate, Miscellaneous Business, and Other, according to the Center.

The data are reported in the Center's publication "Open Secrets", which is published in full at [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org). The data themselves were acquired from the Federal Elections Commission.

Of particular interest are the political donations reported to have been paid to Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House. According to this report, he received 31.7 K\$ from the sectors "Telecom Services & Equipment" and "Computer Equipment

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## CONGRESS DELIVERS ON WISH LIST OF NEW P.A.C. FOR COMPUTER INDUSTRY

***Millions in Lobbying Apparently  
Not Spent in Vain***

By THE CENTER FOR RESPONSIVE  
POLITICS

One of the nation's fastest growing industries, the computer industry enjoyed a year of unrivaled success on Wall Street and on Capitol Hill. Computer companies, buoyed by their popularity among lawmakers, achieved nearly all of their top legislative goals.

A wish list including expansion of a temporary immigration visa program for skilled foreign workers and a moratorium on Internet taxes — a move opposed by local and state governments — passed Congress. The industry's most notable victory, however, was legislation that protected companies from being sued in state courts by aggrieved stockholders over faulty stock projections.

High-tech companies argued that their volatile stock prices made them most vulnerable to such lawsuits. After

Congress passed legislation in 1997 making it harder to bring such suits in federal court, plaintiffs began taking their cases to state courts. In 1998, President Clinton signed legislation establishing a

national standard for such lawsuits, which exempts companies from litigation if they included a disclaimer with their

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***Project Censored Grants Award  
for Mainstream Media's  
Suppressing the Exploitation  
of H-1B Workers  
from Public Knowledge***

Project Censored, a non-profit organization, has ranked the exploitation of H-1B workers as the 10<sup>th</sup> most under-reported story in American media this year.

Two articles by David Bacon were cited for the award: "Immigrants Find High-tech Servitude in Silicon Valley" and "Silicon Valley Sweatshops". The articles may be viewed by visiting Project Censored's website at [www.project-censored.org](http://www.project-censored.org).

Upon receiving the award, Mr. Bacon issued a statement to Project Censored on the issue. This statement is reprinted on page 5.

***\$5000 Challenge Continues***

Donations to the A.E.A. beyond the payment of dues will continue to be matched, dollar for dollar, by an anonymous donor, up to a total of \$5000. This is an easy way to double the impact of your donation dollar.

Members who have jobs should consider donating for the sake of those who have recently been laid off, in addition to the fact that opposition to the H-1B Visa Program is, for many engineers, the only thing standing between them and being replaced by foreign labor.

Make checks payable to "A.E.A., Inc." and mail them to the address listed in the masthead at left. Please indicate "A.E.A. Challenge" on your check. As with any check, writing "For Deposit Only" in the endorsement area prevents the check from being converted to other uses in the event that the check is lost or stolen in the mail.

### Notable and Quotable

If you are a member of a small committee you may reasonably hope to influence its decisions. [But] in national politics, where you are one of some twenty million voters, your influence is infinitesimal unless you are exceptional or occupy an exceptional position. You have, it is true, a twenty-millionth share in the government of others, but only a twenty-millionth share in the government of yourself. You are therefore much more conscious of being governed than of governing. The government becomes in your thoughts a remote and largely malevolent "they," not a set of men whom you, in concert with others who share your opinions, have chosen to carry out your wishes. Your individual feeling about politics, in these circumstances, is not that intended to be brought about by democracy, but much more nearly what it would be under a dictatorship.

— Bertrand Russell  
*Authority and the Individual* (1949)  
Chapter 5, paragraph 20.

I observe another evil under the sun, to me a grave one. There was a small town, with only a few inhabitants. A mighty king marched against it, laid siege to it and built great siegeworks around it. But a poverty-stricken sage confronted him and by his wisdom saved the town. No one remembered this poor man afterward. For wisdom may be better than strength, but a poor man's wisdom is never valued and his words are disregarded.

— Qoheleth  
*Ecclesiastes* 9:13 - 16.

You will not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds clear-sighted men and is the ruin of the just man's cause.

— Exodus 23:8

One had might as well deprive a man of his life as take from him his means of earning bread.

— John Stuart Mill  
*Essay on Liberty*

The bearer of gifts is surrounded with favor and grace : but he takes away the souls of those that receive them.

— Apocryphal Proverb of Solomon  
found in the Vulgate but not in original sources.

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem / imposuit, fixit leges pretio atque refixit. / Hic thalamum invasit natae vetitosque hymenaeos. / Ausi omnes immane nefas ausoque potiti.

This man sold his country for gold, and imposed a tyrant over it, made laws and unmade them for a price. That one invaded his daughter's bed and stole a forbidden marriage. All dared immense wrongs and were strong in it.

— Vergil, describing the inhabitants of the infernal city of Dis. *Aeneid* 6:621-24.

Vanity of vanity, all is vanity!  
For all his toil, his toil under the sun,  
what does a man gain by it?

— Qoheleth  
*Ecclesiastes* 1: 3.

## Newly Improved On-Line Database Provides Thorough Information on Companies Hiring with the H-1B and Other Visa Programs

### ***Information acquired from the U.S. Dept. of Labor through a Freedom-of-Information Act Request***

Information about which companies are hiring foreign labor on the H-1B and other visa programs is now published on a separate web-site. The homepage for the database is found by clicking on "LCA Database" at [www.zazona.com](http://www.zazona.com).

The site is the work of Robert Sanchez, who has diligently acquired the data from the U.S. Dept. of Labor and has made the information accessible through an on-line search process.

The acronym "L.C.A." represents "Labor Condition Application" and is the form which every company must fill out to request labor to be filled by the H-1B Visa Program. Each H-1B position in the country, from approximately 1998 through the year 2000, is represented in the database. In addition, information on H-2B visas and Green Card applications is also in the database.

## ***High-Tech's Expenditure on Political Influence Tops 100 M\$***

*Continued from Page 1.*

& Services". Mr. Hastert was instrumental in maneuvering the near doubling of the H-1B Visa Program through the House floor by having the bill be passed on a voice vote with only forty representatives present.

Donations sizes are of several types: medium, large and very large.

The donations of Harris Miller, President of the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), total more than \$20,000. Most of this was given directly to candidates, and another \$5,750 was directed through ITAA.

The Technology Network Federal PAC made much larger and more numerous contributions: \$31,130 to House Democratic candidates, \$24,436 to House Republicans, \$29,031 to Senate Democrats, \$45,646 to Senate Republicans, and \$3791 to the election campaign of George Bush.

In terms of sheer size, Microsoft Corporation comes out on top, donating a combination of hard and soft money totaling 4.6 M\$ in the year 2000, up from 1.3 M\$ in 1998. Microsoft Corporation was top campaign contributor in the high-tech industry for both election cycles.

*Any conclusions?  
Any prompt or appropriate?*

## ***Congress Passes Legislation Sought by High-Tech Industry***

*Continued from Page 1.*

stock predictions.

The industry's tremendous success can be credited in large part to its leading political action group, the Technology

Network. The bipartisan group, formed in 1997, has raised the computer industry's legislative profile by arranging meetings between political and industry leaders.

*This article is reprinted with the permission of the Center for Responsive Politics. The original appears on the Web at [www.opensecrets.org/pubs/lobby98/topind10.htm](http://www.opensecrets.org/pubs/lobby98/topind10.htm).*

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## **Statement on Guest-Worker Programs**

**by David Bacon**

Reprinted with the Author's Permission

"Immigrants Find High-Tech Servitude in Silicon Valley" exposed the impact of Silicon Valley's H1-B contract labor program on both contract workers themselves, and on other workers in high-tech and other industries. The media generally accept uncritically the idea that a legitimate purpose of immigration law is to supply labor to U.S. industry, and therefore saw little wrong with contract labor proposals.

Other proposals to institute and expand contract labor programs in agriculture, meat-packing, and other industries were made this year. If adopted, they will have a disastrous impact on immigrant workers, treating them as cheap, disposable labor instead of giving them legal status and protecting their rights. As just one result, efforts to organize unions by immigrants and non-immigrants alike will be made much more difficult.

These consequences for workers were ignored by the generally supportive way the mainstream press covered Silicon Valley's effort to pass a bill expanding the H1-B program. A few articles covered fraud in the program's administration, but hardly any looked at the exploitation of the workers themselves, and none at the bill's potential impact on labor and union organizing.

This year immigrant rights groups were joined by the AFL-CIO in an historic call for a general immigration amnesty and the repeal of employer sanctions (the law which makes

it a crime for an undocumented worker to hold a job). That received some press coverage, but the media then ignored the way those proposals fell victim to calls for contract labor.

In early October, Silicon Valley's proposal was adopted by a unanimous vote in the House, and only one dissent, Ernest Hollings, in the Senate. To ensure the right outcome, the vote was held late at night, after the Republican leadership had assured Democrats that no more significant votes would be taken.

Microsoft, Intel, and other high tech giants showed their gratitude by contributing hundreds of thousands of soft-money dollars, through the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, to the unsuccessful reelection campaign of Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI), who shepherded the bill to passage.

The H-1B+ strategy, which tried to tie limited immigration reforms to the proposal, failed. Republican Congressional leaders passed the contract labor proposal without amendments. In an election year in which both parties were courting the votes of the powerful and wealthy high-tech industry, no one wanted to vote against it, with or without pro-immigrant reforms.

In subsequent weeks, the administration and Democratic leaders tried to tack the proposal, called the Latino Immigrant Fairness Act, onto other legislation. Through the November election, that effort was resisted by Republicans, and Democrats negotiated further and further concessions. In the closing days

of Congress, an agreement was reached on legislation which contained almost none of the original proposals.

Meanwhile, however, the danger of contract labor actually increased. Agribusiness negotiated an expansion of the current "guestworker" law, which permits growers to import farm workers. In return, many undocumented farm workers would have been allowed to apply for visas. Although anti-immigrant Congress members defeated that proposal, it will be reintroduced next year.

In Nebraska, scene of the nation's largest workplace immigration raids two years ago (see "The INS Takes On Labor," *The Nation*, 9/99), the governor proposed a contract labor program to supply workers to the meatpacking industry. And as unions and community organizations geared up to organize workers in non-union plants, the INS resumed wholesale deportations. A new Republican administration will have an even more favorable attitude toward business proposals for contract worker programs.

Divisions among Democrats will make it difficult to defeat them. At the same time, the anti-immigrant Right will oppose any broad amnesty for undocumented workers or effort to lift employer sanctions and end INS workplace raids. The AFL-CIO, churches, and community organizations, however, remain committed to those pro-immigrant reforms. That promises a fight over these proposals in this year's Congress.

## Rate at which H-1B Visas are Granted Surges by 74% during Recent Economic Downturn

*Over 700 H-1B Visas are Granted Daily, on Average, during 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr of 2001.*

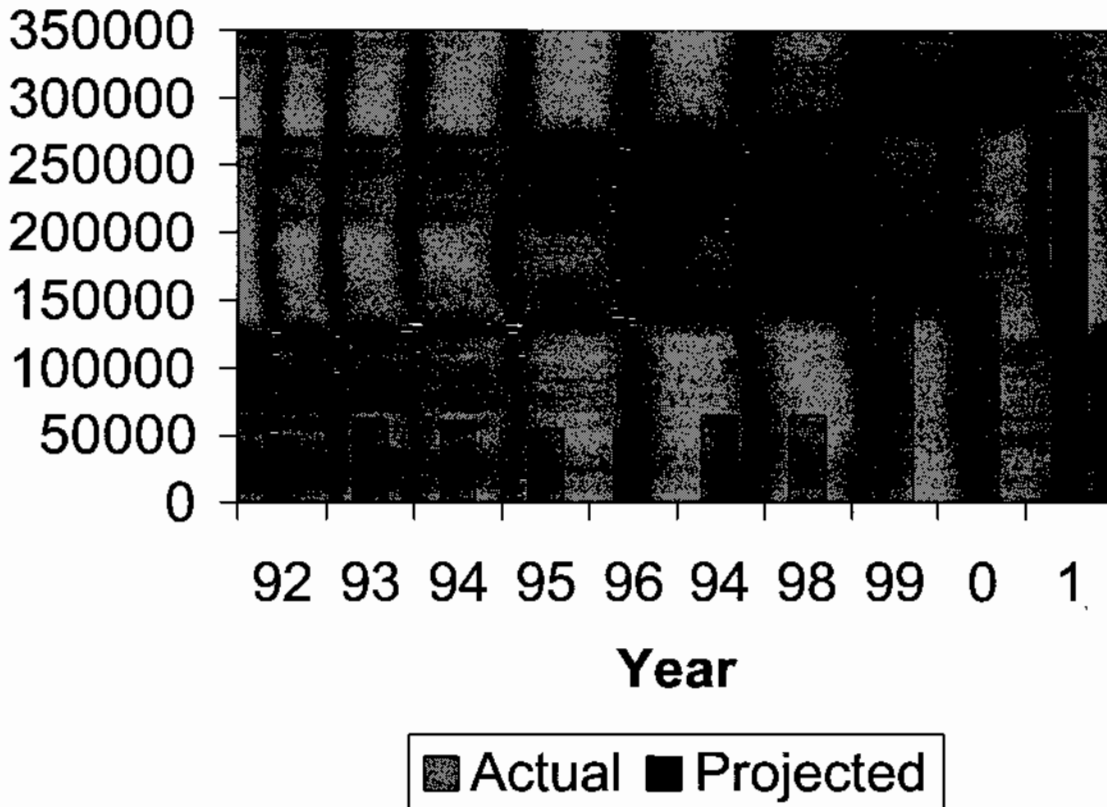
**By DAMON SCOTT**

In the first three months of 2001, American industry requested and received 72,000 H-1B visas for guest workers, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

That works to 789 visas a day, up considerably from 452 per day granted in 2000.

Year	Visas	Year	Visas
'92	48 645	'97	65 000
'93	61 591	'98	65 000
'94	60 279	'99	154 000
'95	54 178	'00	165 000
'96	55 141		
First Quarter of 2001:		72 000	

## H1-Bs Admitted Each Year



Source of Data (not Projection): Immigration and Naturalization Service  
 Projection is formed by extrapolating 72,000 / (3 months) to 288,000 / (1 year)

## **Join the A.E.A!**

***The A.E.A. knows American engineering and engineers are good, and dissents against America's inferiority complex in science and mathematics.***

Ever since Sputnik went into orbit in 1957, an entire industry has grown up to extract money for science and engineering by depicting American science as inferior to that of other countries. A generation has passed, and Americans have to their credit far more than the one-twentieth part of the world's scientific achievement which would accrue to us if our accomplishments were proportional to our numbers. But America and Americans ignore our achievements and instead cultivate a complex of presumed national inferiority in science and technology. Those hankering after government money, notably the educational establishment and the National Science Foundation, are particularly active in fostering prejudice against American engineers, by playing to malicious stereotypes of Americans as dim, lazy and poorly trained. This utterly false depiction of American engineering talent is costing American engineers their morale and their jobs, as America almost gleefully sees American engineers being laid off and replaced with foreign labor. The A.E.A. finds this situation intolerable.

***The A.E.A. provides meaningful opposition to the H-1B Visa Program.***

The American Engineering Association knows what everyone else does about the Laws of Supply and Demand, but the A.E.A. is almost alone in opposing the H-1B Visa Program, which at the current time is the single most pressing issue facing the American engineering profession. Currently tens of thousands of American engineers are losing their jobs every year as they are readily replaced by cheaper labor under the H-1B Visa Program. We know that this Visa Program, if left unchecked, will put nearly every American engineer out of a job. Already, in many engineering departments, fewer than half the employees are U.S. citizens.

***A convenient email account is available to every member.*** Just as many people have both a work and a home phone, just so most people nowadays need two email accounts. A personal email account is a great convenience, and the American Engineering Association provides one for every member. After no more than ten minutes configuring the options of your web browser (either Internet Explorer or Netscape), your email thereafter will be quickly and conveniently downloaded to your local hard drive from the A.E.A. server. Once there, you may read, write, reply to and print your email without the annoyance of waiting for web traffic at every operation.

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