



White House says immigration action will add billions to GDP

November 21, 2014

The White House estimates the president's executive actions on immigration would net the U.S. economy an estimated \$90 billion-\$210 billion increase in GDP over the next ten years. CCTV America's Jessica Stone reported this story from Washington, D.C.

Two years after calling for immigration reform at a Las Vegas high school, U.S. president Obama returned today to sign portions of his executive action to defer the deportation of 5 million of undocumented immigrants and grant them legal work permits if they register with the government.

However, two years ago, when the president deferred deportation for about one million undocumented young adults who came to the U.S. illegally as children, only 40 percent were granted the status.

Analysts also said the president's decision to expand visas for foreign entrepreneurs and spouses of high-skilled workers could also add to the U.S. economy, although less so.

"Instead of having someone who's spouse sort of stay at home and not work, they can be out there in the economy, helping businesses grow. And also increase their family's income which will allow them to spend more money in the U.S. economy," said said Alex Nowrasteh of [CATO Institute](#).

Obama's immigration plan doesn't address increasing H1-B visas

President Obama's speech was closely followed by hi-tech companies, who have intensely lobbied for increasing the number of visas for highly-skilled workers. CCTV America's Mark Niu reported this story from Silicon Valley, California.

At a recent tech exhibit Annirudh Duddala introduced customers to [Grene Robotics](#), which helps get people, machines, and infrastructure on one platform.

Duddala came to the U.S. when he was 17 years old to study engineering at Purdue University.

Like so many foreign students, he stayed in the U.S. after graduation, working on a temporary [H1-B Visa](#), a visa that prevented him from getting a job with another company.

“My pay would only go up one of two percentage points compared to my peers who I knew were getting significantly higher raises because the company knew I was not going anywhere any time soon. It becomes a viscous cycle. You end up stuck in there and that ends up dictating a lot of your life and your life decisions,” he said.

Right now, if he gets a better offer from another company, he has the option to take the job.

“It’s a good start. It gives more flexibility to people on temporary visas H1-B’s to be able to switch jobs, leave the country in case of emergency without risking their application and their spouses will be able to work now,” said Emily Lam, vice president of Silicon Valley Leadership Group

Lam said the most crucial issue, increasing the yearly allotment of 65,000 H1-b visas, wasn’t addressed by Obama partly because the U.S. Congress has the authority to raise those caps, not the president.

In fact, [Compete America](#), a collation representing tech giants like Facebook, Microsoft and Amazon, estimates the U.S. loses half a million jobs each year due to the current temporary visa limits.

“A lot of our CEO’s talk about how they are now in a global competition for talent. And if they can’t hire them here they still want to hire that person. So they will hire them in Singapore, or Canada or even Latin America,” Lam added.

Annirudh grew frustrated with the system and joined Grene Robotics with a business visa that grants him 10 years of legal status in the U.S. But he sacrificed his spot in the process to become a permanent resident.

Silicon Valley representatives hope the president’s executive action will help future prospects avoid such dilemmas, though some remain skeptical that the system will change any time soon.