ANALYSIS OF CLAIMS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION ON H-1B VISAS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trump administration makes highly selective claims that ignore a large body of economic research on the benefits of admitting H-1B visa holders to justify its presidential proclamation imposing a travel ban on H-1B visa holders whose employers do not pay a prohibitive $100,000 penalty. The presidential proclamation's omissions, cherry picking and obfuscation of data indicate the administration decided on the policy details in the proclamation and later attempted to find material to support the policy rather than engage in a legitimate analysis that culminated in banning the entry of H-1B visa holders, absent a $100,000 fee.

The presidential proclamation issued on September 19, 2025, bans "the entry into the United States of aliens as nonimmigrants to perform services in a specialty occupation under section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the INA . . . except for those aliens whose petitions are accompanied or supplemented by a payment of $100,000."[1] The restriction lasts for 12 months, starting on September 21, 2025, and can be renewed. According to Customs and Border Protection, "The Proclamation applies prospectively to petitions that have not been filed. It does not impact aliens who are beneficiaries of currently approved petitions, any petitions filed prior to 12:01 AM ET on September 21, 2025, or aliens in possession of validly issued H-1B nonimmigrants visas."[2] There is no information in the proclamation on obtaining a "national interest" waiver to avoid paying the $100,000 penalty.[3]

Table 1
Decline in the Unemployment Rate in Technology Fields

Occupation	August 2024 Unemployment Rate	August 2025 Unemployment Rate	Percentage Decline From August 2024 to August 2025
Computer and Math Occupations	3.4%	3.0%	-11.8%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	1.7%	1.4%	-17.6%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Foundation for American Policy.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S CLAIMS ON UNEMPLOYMENT

The presidential proclamation cites a rising unemployment rate in technology fields to justify imposing a travel ban on H-1B visa holders, even though the unemployment rate has *declined* in these fields. The unemployment rate for

[1] "Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers," by the President of the United States of America, a proclamation, September 19, 2025.
[2] https://x.com/CBP/status/1969512486627095007.
[3] The proclamation states, "The restriction imposed pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall not apply to any individual alien, all aliens working for a company, or all aliens working in an industry, if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines, in the Secretary's discretion, that the hiring of such aliens to be employed as H-1B specialty occupation workers is in the national interest and does not pose a threat to the security or welfare of the United States."

computer and mathematical occupations dropped from 3.4% to 3.0% between August 2024 and August 2025, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The unemployment rate for architecture and engineering occupations fell from 1.7% to 1.4% between August 2024 and August 2025. Those numbers represent a decline in the unemployment rate in percentage terms of 11.8% for individuals in computer and mathematical occupations and a drop of 17.6% for professionals in architecture and engineering.[4]

The proclamation is selective in using a range of 2019 to 2025 to claim that unemployment rates are rising in computer occupations when readily available data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows, as noted, that between August 2024 and August 2025 the unemployment rate declined in percentage terms by 11.8% for individuals in computer and mathematical occupations and 17.6% for professionals in architecture and engineering.

In the proclamation's sparse economic justification for imposing the travel, the administration cites the "foreign share" of computer and math occupations rising from 17.1% to 26.1% between 2000 and 2019. However, it fails to acknowledge that in 2019, after this increase in the "foreign share," the unemployment rate in computer and math occupations remained below 2.0%.[5]

Another example of what many would call "cherry picking" can be seen in the proclamation citing tables from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York that uses data from 2023 showing relatively higher unemployment rates for recent college graduates in some technology fields, even though the data were two years old and in 2022, the unemployment rate in these fields was far lower. The proclamation did not note that the data on recent college graduates came from 2023. The New York Fed routinely generates four tables looking at the labor market for what it labels "recent college graduates" defined as all individuals aged 22 to 27 who have a college degree. The fourth table divides the population of college graduates aged 22 to 27 into 72 college majors, resulting in much smaller sample sizes.

The small subset calls into question the precision of numbers, according to the proclamation, showing "among college graduates ages 22 to 27, computer science and computer engineering majors are facing some of the highest unemployment rates in the country at 6.1 percent and 7.5 percent, respectively—more than double the unemployment rates of recent biology and art history graduates."[6] As noted, the proclamation fails to note those numbers are from 2023. The small sample size creates volatility in these numbers. The proclamation does not note that in 2022, the survey's subset shows an unemployment rate of only 2.5% for 22- to 27-year-old computer engineering majors. Other fields also showed wild fluctuations. Youth with a bachelor's degree in agricultural

[4] Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Last Modified Date: September 5, 2025.
[5] NFAP analysis using monthly BLS CPS microdata pooled over calendar years.
[6] "Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers," presidential proclamation.

economics went from a 6.7% unemployment rate in 2022 to 2.6% in 2023. It is unlikely that either set of numbers is a strong indicator of career prospects in those fields. "Ethnic studies" has an unemployment rate of 2.6% in the report, but the proclamation does not recommend that field as a career choice. It is also cherry-picking that the proclamation only cites the 2023 unemployment numbers for computer science and computer engineering majors without mentioning both fields have the highest median salaries of any major.

Another example of cherry picking can be seen in the proclamation citing a study that "wages for American computer scientists would have been 2.6 percent to 5.1 percent higher and employment in computer science for American workers would have been 6.1 percent to 10.8 percent higher in 2001 absent the importation of foreign workers into the computer science field."[7] The proclamation fails to note that the paper claims only that wages and jobs among U.S. natives might have gone up a little more in their counterfactual example, not that either fell during the 1990s. It also does not acknowledge that consumers and businesses benefited in the study's example.

The authors of the study note that there was a significant improvement for computer workers during this period. Employment of computer scientists and software developers *rose by 161%* from 1990 to 2000, and median real wages rose by 18%.[8] The proclamation fails to acknowledge the unrealistic counterfactual the authors of the study used. The study assumed that from 1994 to 2001, the United States was "the only producer of IT" in the world, which eliminates the most common way U.S. employers respond to immigration restrictions on highly skilled workers: offshoring and hiring outside of America. An article reviewing the study concluded, "That assumption strains credulity, since faced with current and past immigration restrictions, nearly all major and even mid-sized U.S. companies have set up or expanded offices and placed high-skilled people abroad. Policymakers who support restrictions on high-skilled immigration by assuming U.S. companies will not respond by placing even more work abroad are mistaken."[9]

The proclamation's assertion that, because of H-1B visa holders, Americans might be better off entering "art history" or other fields in science and technology is refuted by readily available economic data. The proclamation's claim is unsupported that "abuses of the H-1B program present a national security threat by discouraging Americans from pursuing careers in science and technology, risking American leadership in these fields."[10]

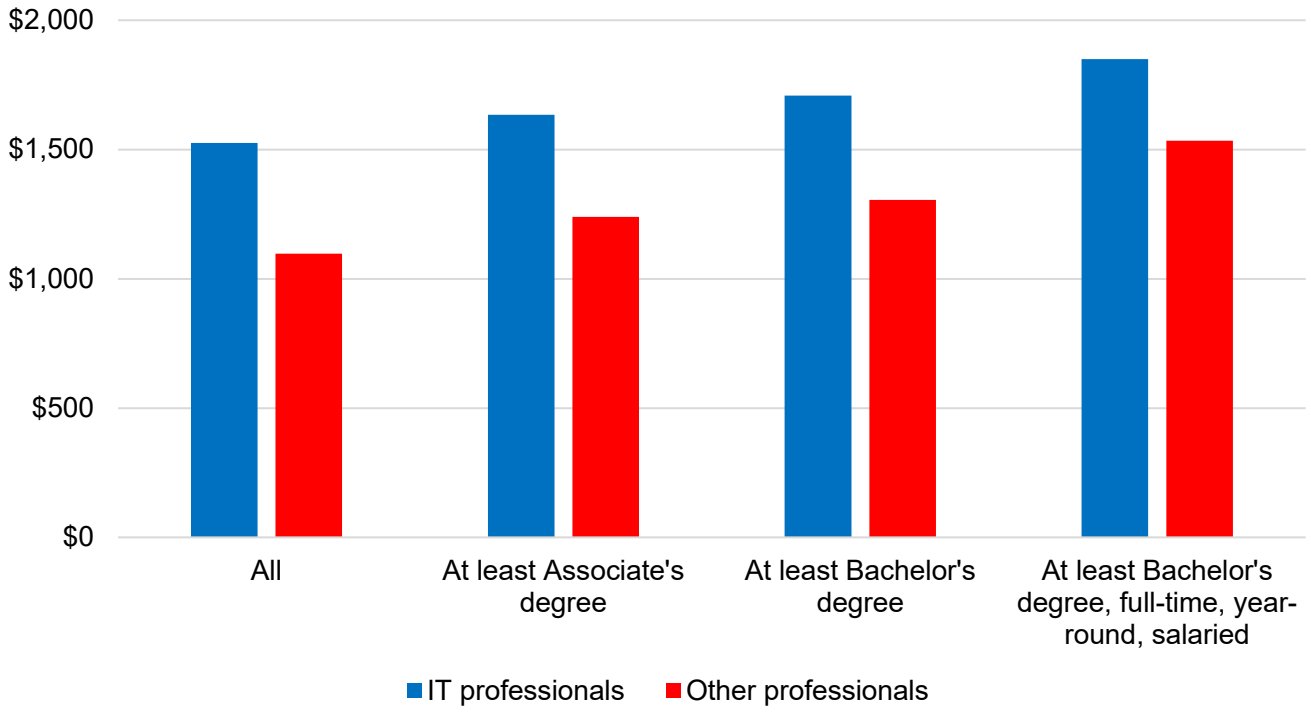
In a 2021 study published by the National Foundation for American Policy, Madeline Zavodny, an economics professor at the University of North Florida and a former research economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

[7] Ibid.
[8] Stuart Anderson, "President Trump's Executive Order Targeting Foreign Techies Will Hurt American Companies and Workers," *Reason*, April 20, 2017.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers," presidential proclamation.

and Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, found that substantial economic incentives exist for U.S.-born professionals to enter science and technology fields rather than other occupations.

"Despite oft-voiced concerns that U.S. IT workers and computer-related majors are disadvantaged by having to compete with foreign-born workers, either via offshoring or immigration, the evidence clearly indicates that IT professionals and computer-related majors have relatively high earnings," concluded Zavodny. "IT professionals earn more than other professionals across all education groups examined here, and they earn more, on average, than other professionals who have similar demographics characteristics, live in the same state, and work in the same industry. Workers who have a bachelor's degree in a computer-related field earn more than their counterparts with a degree in another STEM field or in a non-STEM field. The same is true for recent bachelor's or master's degree recipients."[11]

Figure 1
Median Weekly Earnings of U.S.-Born IT Professionals and Other Professionals, by Education, 2002-2020



Note: Calculations are based on Current Population Survey data for U.S. natives. Earnings are adjusted for inflation.

[11] Madeline Zavodny, The Earnings of IT Professionals Compared With Other Professionals, *NFAP Policy Brief, National Foundation for American Policy*, June 2021.

Zavodny's analysis of the data shows:

- Median earnings of IT professionals were 40 percent higher than median earnings of other professionals, according to data on U.S.-born workers from the Current Population Survey for the period 2002 to 2020.
- Median earnings of college graduates with a computer-related major are 35 percent higher than other STEM majors and fully 83 percent higher than non-STEM majors, according to data on U.S.-born college graduates from the American Community Survey for the period 2009 to 2019.
- The earnings gap between college graduates with a major in computer and information systems or another computer-related field and other STEM majors has increased over time.
- Median earnings of recent bachelor's degree recipients with a computer-related major are about 15 to 40 percent higher than other STEM majors, depending on the year, according to an analysis of data on recent U.S.-born bachelor's and master's degree recipients from the National Survey of College Graduates in 2010, 2013, 2015, and 2017.
- Median earnings of recent master's degree recipients with a computer-related major are about 10 to 40 percent higher than other STEM majors, depending on the year.[12]

The administration cites independent events and presents a misleading conclusion in the proclamation. The proclamation notes that some companies that file H-1B petitions also laid off workers. There is no evidence presented in the proclamation that the companies laid off large numbers of people doing the same jobs as the H-1B visa holders, or if the company had been prohibited from hiring H-1B visa holders, it would have resulted in no or fewer laid off workers. Research by economist Britta Glennon, cited elsewhere in this analysis, concluded that when companies face restrictions on hiring H-1B visa holders, they respond by sending more jobs, resources and research and development outside of the United States.[13]

THE ADMINISTRATION'S CLAIMS ON FOREIGN-BORN DISCOURAGING U.S.-BORN

The proclamation states, without citing evidence, that the existence of H-1B visa holders discourages U.S. students or workers from entering high technology fields. The research on international students shows that the opposite is the case and that more international students encourage U.S. students to enter science, technology, engineering and math fields. The ability to work in the United States after graduation, which the proclamation will limit in combination with other administration policies, motivates many international students to enroll at U.S. universities.

[12] Ibid.
[13] Britta Glennon, *How Do Restrictions on High-Skilled Immigration Affect Offshoring? Evidence from the H-1B Program*, Carnegie Mellon University, May 2019. The paper has also appeared in updated versions.

"Enrolling more international undergraduate students does not crowd out U.S. students at the average American university and leads to an increase in the number of bachelor's degrees in STEM (science, engineering, computer science, and mathematics/statistics) majors awarded to U.S. students, according to new research," according to an NFAP study by Madeline Zavodny. "Each additional 10 bachelor's degrees—across all majors—awarded to international students by a college or university leads to an additional 15 bachelor's degrees in STEM majors awarded to U.S. students."[14]

Zavodny explained why international students result in more U.S.-born STEM majors. "International students are considerably more likely to major in STEM fields than in most other areas of study, indicating U.S. students are taking more classes with international students rather than avoiding majors popular with international students," she writes. "Colleges and universities that attract more international students likely are devoting more resources to STEM areas, such as increasing the number of courses and adding fields offered within STEM, hiring more faculty, and providing new lab spaces and buildings. To the extent such changes are occurring, they appear to be attractive to U.S. students as well."[15]

JOBS FOR U.S.-BORN IN COMPUTER OCCUPATIONS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY

The data show that the proclamation's assertions that H-1B visa holders prevented U.S. engineers and computer specialists from gaining jobs over the past two decades are incorrect. The number of U.S.-born workers employed in computer science and mathematical occupations increased by over 2.7 million, or 141%, between 2003 and 2024, according to a National Foundation for American Policy analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data.[16] This compares to an 8% increase in the number of U.S.-born workers in the whole economy.

Table 2
Employment of U.S.-Born College Graduates in Computer and Mathematical Occupations: 2003 to 2024

OCCUPATION	2003	2024	Increase from 2003 to 2024
U.S.-Born Employment in Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1,943,000	4,690,000	+2,747,000 (+141%)

Source: National Foundation for American Policy analysis and tabulations of BLS Current Population Survey files.

[14] Madeline Zavodny, *The Impact of U.S. Men and Women in STEM Fields of Increases in International Students*, NFAP Policy Brief, National Foundation for American Policy, April 2021.
[15] Ibid. According to Zavodny, "The positive relationship is after controlling for school fixed effects and linear trends, so regardless of its cause the finding an increase in international students at a school leads to an increase in the number of bachelor's degrees in STEM majors awarded to U.S. students is a robust relationship."
[16] National Foundation for American Policy analysis and tabulations of the Bureau of Labor Statistics monthly microdata files pooled over calendar years.

"While the foreign-born have been of increasing importance in all STEM fields, they are not displacing natives. Employment of U.S.-born workers in computer and STEM fields has grown much faster than the labor force as a whole," according to Mark Regets, a labor economist and senior fellow at the National Foundation for American Policy.

Employment in computer and mathematical occupations in the United States, including the foreign-born, increased by 166% between 2003 and 2024, illustrating that there is not a fixed number of jobs and employment in the technology sector surged while many foreign-born scientists and engineers immigrated.[17]

Table 3
Employment of U.S.-Born College Graduates in STEM Occupations: 2003 to 2024

OCCUPATION	2003	2024	Increase from 2003 to 2024
U.S.-Born Employment in STEM Occupations	6,002,000	9,007,000	+3,005,000 (+50%)

Source: National Foundation for American Policy analysis and tabulations of BLS Current Population Survey files.

The number of U.S.-born workers employed in all STEM-related occupations (including computer and mathematical occupations) increased by over 3 million, or 50%, between 2003 and 2024. Employment in STEM-related occupations in the United States, including the foreign-born, increased by 64% between 2003 and 2024, additional evidence there is not a fixed number of jobs.[18] In addition, the National Science Foundation has explained that *approximately* 12 million people or more who report "their jobs required at least [a bachelor's degree] level of technical expertise in one or more Science & Engineering fields" are not included in the federal government's definition of a STEM occupation.

National Security

The proclamation asserts that "abuses of the H-1B program present a national security threat by discouraging Americans from pursuing careers in science and technology, risking American leadership in these fields."[19] However, government reports on national security have recommended the opposite of the proclamation's approach and instead encourage greater access to foreign-born talent, indicating the proclamation uses the phrase "national security" for tactical reasons instead of presenting an actual national security solution.

According to the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI), which reported to Congress in 2021, "America is not prepared to defend or compete in the AI era." The report cites shortcomings in U.S. policies

[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

to admit highly skilled immigrants as a primary reason America is unprepared and recommends issuing more visas and green cards to attract and retain talent. [20]

"[T]he United States needs to win the international talent competition by improving both STEM [science, technology, engineering and math] education and our system for admitting and retaining highly skilled immigrants," write Eric Schmidt and Robert Work in the report. Schmidt, former CEO and chairman of Google and cofounder of Schmidt Futures, chaired the commission. Work, a former deputy secretary of defense, served as vice chair. "The United States risks losing the global competition for scarce AI expertise if it does not cultivate more potential talent at home and recruit and retain more existing talent from abroad," according to the report.[21]

"Immigration reform is a national security imperative," the report concludes. "Nations that can successfully attract and retain highly skilled individuals gain strategic and economic advantages over competitors. Human capital advantages are particularly significant in the field of AI, where demand for talent far exceeds supply. Highly skilled immigrants accelerate American innovation, improve entrepreneurship and create jobs."[22]

The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology, chaired by Sen. Todd Young (R-IN), recommended changing U.S. immigration laws to allow America to increase the number of biotechnology researchers. "Current policies make it difficult for foreign STEM students and professionals to stay permanently in America, start businesses and contribute to the U.S. economy and innovation base, particularly in the defense sector," according to the report. "The Commission heard from experts in industry and academia that China is actively recruiting graduates from American universities as part of a long-term effort to surpass the United States."[23]

Temporary visa holders are 71.3% of the postdocs in biological and biosystems engineering, 70.1% in biotechnology, 68.3% in biophysics, 68.1% in biomedical sciences, 66.1% in oncology and cancer research and 60.9% in biochemistry.[24]

"These highly educated and credentialed biotechnologists have access to American research and intellectual property, they often generate pathbreaking inventions and they often go on to establish valuable startups,"

[20] https://www.nscai.gov/2021-final-report/.
[21] Ibid. Emphasis added. The United States must move aggressively on both fronts. Congress should pass a National Defense Education Act II to address deficiencies across the American educational system—from K-12 and job reskilling to investing in thousands of undergraduate- and graduate-level fellowships in fields critical to the AI future. *At the same time, Congress should pursue a comprehensive immigration strategy for highly skilled immigrants to encourage more AI talent to study, work, and remain in the United States through new incentives and visa, green card, and job-portability reforms*."
[22] Ibid.
[23] https://www.biotech.senate.gov/.
[24] National Foundation for American Policy, Stuart Anderson, "As Trump Deports Students, Biotech Panel Asks For More Immigration," *Forbes*, September 20, 2025.

according to the biotechnology commission's final report. "But many do so outside of the United States, largely because U.S. immigration policy forces them to leave. This failure puts the United States at a strategic disadvantage."[25]

In a 2024 report, the National Academy of Sciences concluded that the United States needs to liberalize its immigration policies to compete with China and other countries in retaining top talent. The NAS committee included scientists, professors and national security experts and recommended Congress expand the number of visas for high-skilled foreign nationals in science and technology fields. The report was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Defense in response to the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act.[26]

"The United States is losing talent because of the annual limits on H-1B and employment-based immigrant visas, said Mark Barteau, the NAS committee's chair, in public remarks broadcast on August 29, 2024. He noted that under the current U.S. immigration system, H-1B visas have become a primary 'retention instrument,'" according to *Forbes*.[27]

The NAS report highlighted studies documenting the benefits of admitting foreign-born scientists and engineers, including National Foundation for American Policy research that found more than 55% of the country's $1 billion startup companies had at least one immigrant founder and that immigrants have been awarded approximately 40% of the Nobel Prizes won by Americans in chemistry, medicine and physics since 2000.

NAS Committee Chair Mark Barteau stated that for at least the next generation, America cannot expect to maintain technological leadership from domestic talent alone.[28]

In computer and information sciences, the leading area of study for AI researchers, 71% of full-time graduate students at U.S. universities are international students.[29]

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[25] https://www.biotech.senate.gov/.
[26] https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/27787/international-talent-programs-in-the-changing-global-environment.
[27] Stuart Anderson, "National Academy Calls For More Immigrant Visas, No Per-Country Limit," *Forbes*, September 3, 2024.
[28] Ibid. "We have already witnessed increasing flows to both allies and potential adversaries resulting in part from more aggressive talent recruitment efforts," said Barteau. "Congress's failure to disentangle visa and immigration policies for students, STEM degree holders, and technology entrepreneurs from the broader challenges of comprehensive immigration reform represents a self-inflicted wound to the continuing scientific and economic leadership of this nation."
[29] National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering, 2021. National Foundation for American Policy. U.S. students include lawful permanent residents. NFAP examined the degrees in fields outside of computer and information sciences found useful in artificial intelligence. At U.S. universities, international students account for 73% of full-time graduate students in electrical and computer engineering, 69% in applied mathematics, 65% in statistics, 58% in multidisciplinary data science and 39% in linguistics.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION IGNORES A LARGE BODY OF RESEARCH

The proclamation fails to acknowledge a vast amount of research that shows the entry of H-1B visa holders benefits the United States and does not harm U.S. workers. It is required under U.S. law for employers to pay the higher of the actual or prevailing wage paid to U.S. workers with similar experience and qualifications. That does not include legal and government fees employers typically pay to petition for H-1B professionals that can range from $5,000 to $30,000 or more, as well as $10,000 to $15,000 or more to sponsor them for permanent residence, according to an NFAP analysis.[30]

The proclamation did not address a study of the proclamation that banned the entry of H-1B visa holders during the first Trump administration. In an NFAP study, economist Madeline Zavodny concluded that the Covid-19 pandemic and Trump administration policies, including the proclamation, reduced H-1B and J-1 visas but did not help U.S. workers. "The drop in H-2B program admissions did not boost labor market opportunities for U.S. workers but rather, if anything, worsened them."[31]

The proclamation cites an unnamed study claiming employers receive a discount when paying an individual at the first level of the Department of Labor's salary classification for foreign workers. The DOL classification is aligned to the amount of experience needed to fill a position. If the experience requires 10 fewer years of experience than the median for an occupation, it is not accurate to call hiring someone at that level to be at a discount. In a domestic context, the years of experience needed to fill a position typically influences the salary level employers pay to the individual selected for that position.

Many studies, both academic and government, have concluded that H-1B visa holders are paid the same or higher than comparable U.S. professionals (i.e., people with the similar degrees and experience) and do not harm the economic prospects of U.S. professionals. Other studies have concluded that H-1B visa holders make significant economic contributions to the United States.

- The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found in the category Electrical/Electronics Engineering Occupations (age group 20-39), the median salary for an engineer in H-1B status was $5,000 higher than for a U.S. engineer.[32]

[30] Stuart Anderson, "New Increase In H-1B Visa Fees Further Shatters 'Cheap Labor' Myth," *Forbes*, November 1, 2021.
[31] Madeline Zavodny, *The Impact of the Covid-19 Drop in International Migration on the U.S. Labor Market*, NFAP Policy Brief, National Foundation for American Policy, February 2022.
[32] Anderson, "New Increase In H-1B Visa Fees Further Shatters 'Cheap Labor' Myth," *Forbes*.

- An analysis by Glassdoor concluded: "Across the 10 cities and roughly 100 jobs we examined, salaries for foreign H-1B workers are about *2.8 percent higher* than comparable U.S. salaries on Glassdoor."[33]

- University of Maryland researchers Sunil Mithas and Henry C. Lucas, Jr., after examining the skills and compensation of over 50,000 IT professionals, wrote, "[C]ontrary to popular belief, non-U.S. citizen IT professionals are not paid less compared to American IT professionals."[34]

- Economists Magnus Lofstrom and Joseph Hayes with the Public Policy Institute of California found, "[O]verall H-1B workers in STEM occupations have higher earnings than their otherwise observationally similar U.S. born counterparts."[35]

- In a May 2020 National Foundation for American Policy study, economist Madeline Zavodny concluded, "H-1B visa holders do not adversely affect U.S. workers. On the contrary, the evidence points to the presence of H-1B visa holders being associated with lower unemployment rates and faster earnings growth among college graduates, including recent college graduates." [36]

- A study by economists Giovanni Peri, Kevin Shih, Chad Sparber and Angie Marek Zeitlin found that denying the entry of H-1B visa holders due to the annual limits harmed job growth for U.S.-born professionals. "The number of jobs for U.S.-born workers in computer-related industries would have grown at least 55% faster between 2005-2006 and 2009-2010, if not for the denial of so many applications in the recent H-1B visa lotteries," concluded the economists.[37]

- Research by Britta Glennon, an assistant professor at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, found new restrictions on H-1B visas are likely to push jobs out of the United States, concluding, "[A]ny policies that are motivated by concerns about the loss of native jobs should consider that policies aimed at reducing immigration have the unintended consequence of encouraging firms to offshore jobs abroad."[38]

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[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Madeline Zavodny, *The Impact of H-1B Visa Holders on the U.S. Workforce*, NFAP Policy Brief, National Foundation for American Policy, May 2020.
[37] Giovanni Peri, Kevin Shih, Chad Sparber and Angie Marek Zeitlin (June 2014), *Closing Economic Windows: How H-1B Visa Denials Cost U.S.-Born Tech Workers Jobs and Wages During the Great Recession*, Partnership for a New American Economy.
[38] Britta Glennon, *How Do Restrictions on High-Skilled Immigration Affect Offshoring? Evidence from the H-1B Program*, Carnegie Mellon University, May 2019.

- A study by Rasha Ashraf (Georgia State) and Rina Ray (University of Colorado at Denver) found "increases in the number of H-1B admissions led to increased worker productivity and company profits, especially in companies that conduct R&D," with patents decreasing in companies "dependent on skilled immigrant" professionals after Congress allowed the H-1B annual limit to decline in 2004.[39]

- Economists Exequiel Hernandez (UPENN Wharton School), Britta Glennon (UPENN and NBER) and Jens Friedmann (Erasmus University Rotterdam School of Management) concluded that the more restrictions on hiring foreign-born talent a company encounters, the more acquisitions it will subsequently make. "In terms of immigration policy, our findings challenge the narrative that constraining immigration creates more opportunities for native workers," according to the authors. "An acquisition is a very strong, costly commitment—both in terms of the purchase price and in the organizational adjustments required to make such a transaction work. It is unlikely that firms would be responding to immigration restrictions through acquisitions unless the need for the foregone talent were real."[40]

- University of California-Davis' Giovanni Peri and Kevin Shih and Colgate University's Chad Sparber concluded that the presence of foreign STEM workers accounts for about 30% to 50% of the aggregate productivity growth in the United States between 1990 and 2010. They also found that a percentage point increase in the share of foreign STEM workers in a city's employment mix "increased the wage growth of native college-educated labor by about 7 to 8 percentage points."[41]

- A study by economists William R. Kerr (Harvard Business School) and William F. Lincoln (University of Michigan) examined patenting and concluded, "Total invention increases with higher [H-1B] admission levels primarily through the direct contributions of immigrant inventors."[42]

The studies listed above are by no means exhaustive of the extensive body of research on H-1B visas. However, they illustrate that Trump officials ignored a vast amount of research in writing a proclamation to impose a travel ban on H-1B visa holders and chose to omit, cherry-pick and obfuscate to justify a predetermined policy outcome.

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[39] Rasha Ashraf and Rina Ray, "Human Capital, Skilled Immigrants, and Innovation," January 17, 2018.
[40] Exequiel Hernandez, Britta Glennon and Jens Friedmann, "Substituting Talent with Transactions: Acquisitions as Responses to Immigration Restrictions," NBER, Working Paper 34248, September 2025.
[41] Giovanni Peri, Kevin Shih, and Chad Sparber, "STEM Workers, H-1B Visas, and Productivity in U.S. Cities," Journal of Labor Economics, Vol. 33, No. S1, US High-Skilled Immigration in the Global Economy (Part 2, July 2015), pp. S225-S255.
[42] William R. Kerr and William F. Lincoln, "The Supply Side of Innovation: H-1B Visa Reforms and U.S. Ethnic Invention," NBER, Working Paper 15768, February 2010.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN POLICY

Established in 2003, the National Foundation for American Policy (NFAP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan public policy research organization based in Arlington, Virginia, focusing on trade, immigration and related issues. Advisory Board members include Columbia University economist Jagdish Bhagwati, Cornell Law School professor Stephen W. Yale-Loehr, Ohio University economist Richard Vedder and former INS Commissioner James Ziglar. Over the past 24 months, NFAP's research has been written about in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other major media outlets. The organization's reports can be found at www.nfap.com. X.com: **@NFAPResearch** Bluesky: @NFAPResearch.bsky.social