

POLITICS

Fury erupts as US brand fires 1,600 employees after securing thousands of foreign worker visas

One lawmaker called to end the H-1B foreign worker visa program entirely to prioritize hiring American workers



By Peter D'Abrosca · Fox News

Published July 9, 2026 12:20pm EDT



+ Add Fox News on Google

👍 246

😞 108

🇺🇸 50

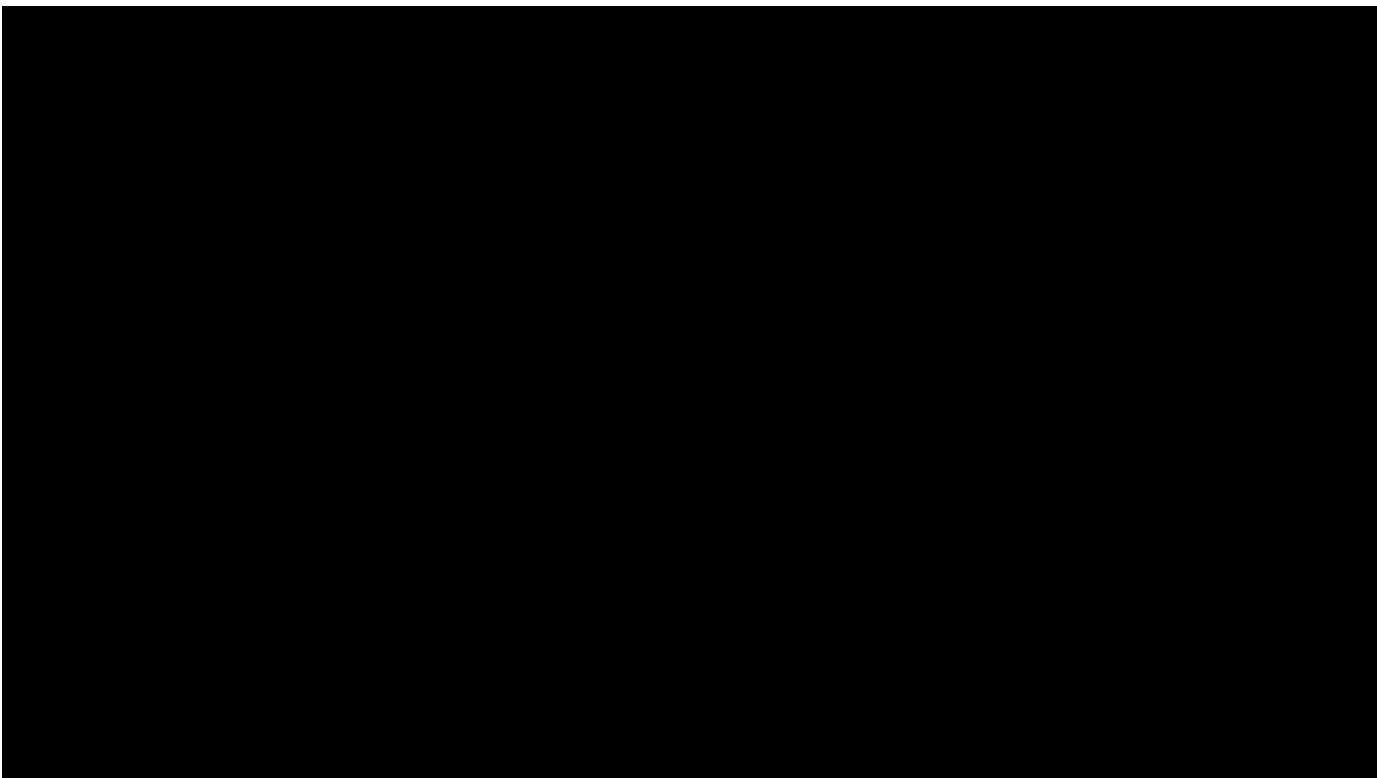
💡 11

👍 4

🔥 3

😭 2

😊



Boston federal judge blocks Trump fee for H-1B visas

A federal judge in Boston has blocked the Trump administration's \$100,000 H-1B visa fee, stating it is an unauthorized tax without congressional approval. The policy, enacted last year, drastically increased the fee from \$2,000-\$5,000 to prioritize U.S. citizens. The White House plans to appeal the decision.

A popular U.S.-based gaming brand [owned by Microsoft](#) is facing fury after mass employee layoffs occurred in the wake of the company being approved for thousands of foreign worker visas.

Microsoft announced that it will lay off 4,800 people total and 1,600 from the corporation's XBOX division, which makes and sells the dominant [video game console](#).

Meanwhile, Microsoft has been approved this year to hire from foreign countries 2,273 employer-sponsored, non-immigrant workers under what is known as the H-1B visa program, according to [data](#) from U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Furious online critics claim that American jobs are being unfairly handed to foreigners in an effort to cut labor costs but at the cost of leaving U.S. workers in the lurch.

'AMERICA FIRST' IMMIGRATION OVERHAUL BILL WOULD CODIFY TRUMP'S CAMPAIGN PROMISES ONCE AND FOR ALL



Asha Sharma, chief executive officer of Xbox,, during the Bloomberg Tech conference in San Francisco, California, US, on Thursday, June 4, 2026. The event brings together the leading CEOs, investors and innovators who are harnessing technology to change the world around us. Photographer: David Paul Morris/Bloomberg via Getty Images (David Paul Morris/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

"A great way to fix this is to throw anyone doing this in prison," [said one user](#) on X. "Fire Americans to replace with thousands of visa workers? Straight to jail, and assets seized. This story has been told countless times. Fire American staff and hire foreigners. Over and over."

"It is the fault of our Government [sic] for approving the H-1Bs," another [social media user](#) lamented. "Our Government [sic] has sold us out of jobs at home and those being moved to other countries."

HOUSE REPUBLICANS RIP INTO SENATE FOR DELAYING IMMIGRATION RECONCILIATION PACKAGE: 'I'M VERY FRUSTRATED'

Another user [described](#) the H-1B program as "industrial scale job theft from Americans."

Microsoft is the sixth-largest beneficiary of H-1B visas, a program that is overwhelmingly dominated by workers from India. The company has even more H-1B applications pending. Microsoft has employees worldwide, but most are in the United States.

"These decisions are based on business need, not visa status. H-1B employees were also impacted by job eliminations in the U.S.," a Microsoft spokesperson told Fox News Digital when reached for comment on the lay offs.



Fans compete in a gaming tournament at Microsoft retail store at the Florida Mall on November 21, 2013 in Orlando, Florida and another five cities across the country for a chance to win up to \$25,000 in prizes and a chance to participate in a final showdown at the Jacksonville, Fla. Microsoft Store opening, featuring a performance by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis. Tournament finalists will receive an Ultimate Xbox One Gaming House including all launch night titles in each of the six participating stores. (Photo by Gerardo Mora/Getty Images for Microsoft) (Gerardo Mora/Getty Images for Microsoft)

"Every single employer is exploiting the H-1B visa program," said the [Project for Immigration Reform](#).

A lawmaker even called for a complete end to the non-immigrant visa program.

TRUMP TAPS ACTING LABOR SECRETARY KEITH SONDERLING FOR PERMANENT ROLE PENDING SENATE CONFIRMATION

"This is INSANE. LEGAL immigration is a major problem. These companies, [especially big tech](#), are abusing these immigration programs to replace American workers with foreign workers," said Rep. Riley Moore, R-W.Va.

"No more. It's long past time to end the H-1B scam."

XBOX CEO Asha Sharma cited the company's financial health for the layoffs.

"Our business today is not healthy," said a memo from Sharma, according to [The Associated Press](#). "We are operating at margins that are 3-10x lower than comparable platform and publishing businesses."



Sharma added that her strategy is to "reset" XBOX.

Some online critics, however, claimed Sharma's Indian heritage played a role in firing the Americans, given the percentage of H-1B workers from India. Sharma was born in Wisconsin.

Vice President [JD Vance announced](#) on Tuesday a large-scale investigation into H-1B visa fraud.

"Today, I'm proud to announce that the federal Department of Labor has started dozens of subpoenas and investigations into foreign fraudsters who are trying to take advantage of the H-1B visa program," he said during a press conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"American jobs ought to go to American workers and not foreign fraudsters and the Department

of Labor is fighting back against it."



President Donald Trump signed two executive orders on Sept. 19, 2025, establishing the "Trump Gold Card" and introducing a \$100,000 fee for H-1B visas. The "Trump Gold Card" is a visa program that allows foreign nationals permanent residency and a pathway to U.S. citizenship for a \$1 million investment in the United States. (Andrew Harnik/Getty Images)

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE FOX NEWS APP](#)

Recently, President Donald Trump tried to limit employers' use of the H-1B program by [imposing a \\$100,000 fee](#) for companies seeking H-1B applications.

A federal judge struck down that order, reasoning that it amounted to a tax that only Congress has the ability to impose.

Peter D'Abrosca is a politics reporter at Fox News Digital.