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# 'H-1B pause bill has no legislative traction': Immigration attorney shares why there's no need to panic

A new US bill proposing H-1B visa freeze, salary changes, and stricter rules has triggered concern among professionals. Experts, however, say the proposal has no immediate legal impact and remains far from becoming law.

Written by [Aditi](#)

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New US bill sparks H-1B panic—but experts say reality is different

A new bill in the United States has once again put the spotlight on the [H-1B visa programme](#), creating confusion and worry among foreign tech workers and students who see it as a key route to jobs and long-term settlement in the US.

The bill, called the [End H-1B Visa Abuse Act of 2026](#), was introduced on April 22, 2026, by Republican Congressman Eli Crane along with seven co-sponsors. The proposal suggests a major overhaul of the H-1B system, including a three-year pause on issuing new visas, cutting the annual cap from 65,000 to 25,000, setting a minimum salary requirement of \$200,000, and replacing the lottery system with a wage-based selection model.

As soon as details of the bill spread online, it triggered anxiety in professional circles, especially among those planning to study or work in the United States. Many feared an immediate shutdown of opportunities or sudden changes to their current status.

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However, speaking to [financialexpress.com](https://www.financialexpress.com), Rajiv S. Khanna, Managing Attorney at Immigration.com, said that much of the fear is being driven more by misunderstanding than by any real policy change. He also pointed out that the bill is still a long way from becoming law. At present, it has only eight Republican co-sponsors, no backing in the Senate, and no committee hearings scheduled.

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**'Bill has no legislative traction' says expert**

"The moratorium provision in H.R. 8170 is not the same as an immediate shutdown, and that distinction matters. A three-year freeze means no new H-1B petitions are approved during that window. Current H-1B holders would not be deported overnight, but the bill (if ever passed) does require them to gradually exit, and the pathway from H-1B to permanent residence would close entirely," Khanna explained.

The expert also explained that the bill is still very far from becoming law. "However, the Indian professional community should understand that this bill has no legislative traction. Representative Crane introduced it on April 22, 2026, and as of today, it has eight Republican co-sponsors, no Senate companion bill, and no committee hearing scheduled."

He added, "This is the fourth or fifth H-1B restriction bill introduced in Congress in the past six months alone, and none of them have advanced a single procedural step. The bill is a political statement, not a legislative reality. That does not mean it should be dismissed. These bills signal the direction of a vocal faction in Congress, and that direction is worth watching carefully," the immigration attorney added."

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The proposed minimum salary requirement of \$200,000 has also raised questions. The expert said this rule sounds direct, but could completely change how the H-1B programme works in practice. "The \$200,000 minimum salary threshold is, frankly, designed to sound tough, but in practice it would effectively shut down much of the programme," Khanna told [financialexpress.com](https://www.financialexpress.com).

Khanna explained that the current H-1B system already requires employers to pay the prevailing wage, which differs based on job role and location. A flat \$200,000 benchmark, he added, ignores those differences completely.

"This would wipe out a large number of legitimate H-1B roles in healthcare, education, non-profit research, and mid-level technology jobs across the country,"

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reserved for senior engineers, not the wider pool of skilled workers the programme is meant to support."

Speaking of the proposed wage-based lottery system, Khanna said, it would amplify the imbalance further. According to him, companies with bigger financial resources would dominate the selection process, while hospitals, universities, and smaller tech firms could be pushed out despite depending heavily on H-1B talent.

"The Indian professional community, which is largely made up of mid-career technical workers and early professionals, would be the most affected," he said. "Not because of lack of skill, but because of how their jobs are structured and paid." In his view, the end result would not be a cleaner system, but a narrower one. "This would not end abuse. It would end access for everyone except large, high-paying tech companies," he added.

### Bigger debate around H-1B system


The H-1B programme has long been under political debate in the US. Critics argue it has been misused in some cases and puts pressure on local jobs, while supporters say it is essential for filling skill gaps in technology, healthcare, and research.

Indian professionals make up a large share of H-1B visa holders, which is why any proposed change to the system often has a strong impact on India's tech workforce and students planning to go abroad.


Despite the strong reactions online, experts are advising people not to panic. The bill is still at a very early stage and has a long way to go before becoming law, if it does at all.

Existing H-1B holders are not affected by it at this point, and any future changes would go through a long legislative process involving both the House and the Senate.


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