



January 22, 2018

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Immigration Innovation Act of 2018

Dear Senator Hatch,

On behalf of the 60 members of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), I write to express our strong support for your legislation, the Immigration Innovation (I-Squared) Act of 2018. ITI is the voice of the high-tech community, advocating for policies that advance U.S. leadership in technology and innovation, open access to new and emerging markets, protect and enhance consumer choice, and encourage domestic and global competition. Our [membership](#) includes companies from all verticals of the technology sector, including semiconductor, network equipment, software, digital services, hardware, mobile device, and internet companies.

We have long advocated for changes to our immigration system that allow employers to attract and retain the world's best and highly-educated employees so that we can continue to innovate and compete in a global marketplace. Our members are committed to growing the U.S. economy and creating jobs for—and protecting—American workers. In fact, in the tech sector, we are producing jobs faster than we can fill them. In 2016, there were approximately 3.3 million science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) job openings posted online.¹ By contrast, in that same year, U.S. universities graduated 568,000 students with STEM degrees.² To meet this job demand, it is vital we not only provide STEM education and training to more American students and workers, but that we also ensure U.S.-based employers can recruit the top talent from American universities and from abroad.

The United States is in dire need of a renewed skilled immigration system and the economic benefits of such reforms could not be clearer. For example, over 230,000 additional computer-related jobs would have been created for American workers if not for the 2007 and 2008 H-1B visa petition denials.³ Furthermore, more than half of the startup companies valued at over \$1 billion in the United States were founded by at least one immigrant, many of whom initially

¹ New American Economy, Innovation & STEM Fields, *available at* <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/innovation-stem-fields/>.

² World Economic Forum, The Human Capital Report, *available at* http://www3.weforum.org/docs/HCR2016_Main_Report.pdf.

³ New American Economy, Innovation & STEM Fields.



came here on H-1B visas. On average, each of these companies now employs 760 Americans.⁴ Yet, our broken immigration system continues to stymie such talent and future innovation.

ITI welcomes the introduction of the I-Squared Act of 2018. This critical legislation would upgrade our immigration system for the 21st century economy in several ways. First, it will reset the number of H-1B visas and allow their availability to adjust to meet market demands. Second, it reforms the green card system in ways that will reduce the current backlog, and enable the most exceptional and highly-skilled foreign-born individuals to innovate, start new companies, and advance their professional development and success in the United States. Third, the legislation reflects our industry's commitment to protect American workers, as well as our support for domestic STEM education and training programs.

The I-Squared Act is much-needed legislation that will enable skilled workers who wish to work in the United States to propel American innovation, engender growth in our economy, and help create jobs here at home. We commend you for your diligence on this important issue and urge both the House and Senate to support this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Garfield", is written over a horizontal line.

Dean C. Garfield
President and CEO

⁴ Stuart Anderson, National Foundation for American Policy, "Immigrants and Billion Startups," (March 2016), available at <https://nfap.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Immigrants-and-Billion-Dollar-Startups.NFAP-Policy-Brief.March-2016.pdf>.