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Intel Lays Off 12,000 People After Lobbying For More Foreign Workers

Posted By [Blake Neff](#) On 5:57 PM 04/19/2016 In | [No Comments](#)

One of the top users of foreign workers imported via the H-1B visa program announced Tuesday it's laying off about ten percent of its global workforce.

Tech giant Intel is laying off some 12,000 workers, although it's one of the country's [15 largest users of H-1Bs](#), which are temporary visas that allow companies to hire foreign workers for American tech jobs. The big-time layoffs come even as the company has called for hikes in the number of foreign workers it is able to hire using H-1B visas.

The chip-making giant said the mass firings are part of a "[restructuring initiative](#)" that will further its shift away from the PC business toward smart devices and cloud-based computing.

But the firings stand out in light of Intel's lobbying to expand the H-1B visa program. In 2013, the company's government affairs managers complained that [Intel simply can't find enough homegrown workers](#) in technical fields to meet its needs. And in 2014, the company called for [allowing the spouses and children of H-1B recipients](#) to automatically qualify for work in the U.S. as well.

[dcquiz] Critics accuse Intel and other tech companies of exploiting the visas to drive down labor costs in Silicon Valley, while depriving qualified U.S. workers of jobs. Notably, Intel was also a defendant in a class-action lawsuit that accused several major tech companies, including Apple and Google, of colluding to keep wages low. That suit [was settled for over \\$400 million](#) in 2015.

In 2015, [Microsoft](#), [HP](#), and [Qualcomm](#) all made big layoffs despite lobbying for an increase in H-1Bs. Intel itself also had a smaller layoff wave in 2015, which provoked a denunciation from [Republican Sen. Jeff Sessions](#).

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