

\$2,000 H-1B fee on Indian IT companies could return

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Washington: A special \$2,000 fee could return on H-1B and L-1 visas for Indian IT companies to fund a 9/11 healthcare act in the US with a group of Congressmen quietly mounting fresh efforts to reimpose it.

Such a move has been made part of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act which funds health screenings and treatments for 9/11 first responders.

The bill, named after Detective James Zadroga who died of a respiratory illness in 2006, expired on October 1. Lawmakers are seeking to permanently extend the bill and want to generate necessary funds by imposing a \$2,000 additional fee on H-1B visas.

The bill has been written in such a way that it would impact only Indian companies.

According to NASSCOM, Indian companies had paid between \$70 to 80 million per annum between 2010 and 2015.

The "extra fee applies to companies with at least 50% of their employees on H-1B visa or L-1 visas, and is in addition to the other fees paid by employers," Computerworld reported.

Because of its 50% threshold, it mostly hits the large Indian IT services firms, the leading users of the H-1B visa, the report said.

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