

Grassley criticizes university over its IT offshoring

By Patrick Thibodeau | Computerworld | Nov 9, 2016

Other lawmakers are asking UC, San Francisco, to reconsider its plans



A political backlash is growing over a plan by the University of California, San Francisco, to shift IT jobs overseas. The school is hiring an India-based IT services contractor, and IT workers are expecting to train their foreign replacements.

Several lawmakers have written letters questioning the university's plan, including Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which oversees immigration.

"It is clear that the University is seeking to replace American workers with lower-cost foreign workers abroad and potentially also in the United States," wrote Grassley, in a letter to Janet Napolitano, the president of the University of California system. The letter, which was sent in late September, has not been made public, but a copy was obtained by *Computerworld*.

[The full three-page letter: <http://core0.staticworld.net/assets/2016/11/07/letter-to-uofc-pres-apolitano-about-layoffs-and-visas.pdf>]

The university's San Francisco campus hired HCL, an IT outsourcing firm and user of H-1B visa workers, under a contract valued at \$50 million over five years. The university is laying off (<http://www.computerworld.com/article/3117602/it-outsourcing/university-of-california-to-send-some-it-jobs-to-india.html>), early next year, 49 permanent IT employees, along with 30 contractors. Labor condition application notices, which cite the salary and occupation of H-1B workers, have been posted at the worksite.

Grassley wrote that "our visa programs were never intended to facilitate the replacement of qualified American workers with foreign workers, not did Congress envision that employers would retain foreign guest workers rather than similarly qualified American workers, when employers cut jobs."

U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.), wrote to Napolitano on Friday, asking her to "reconsider the decision to outsource the UCSF IT jobs using the H-1B program and refrain from taking similar measures elsewhere in the UC system."

"Using this visa program to undercut and eliminate U.S. jobs runs directly counter to Congressional intent for this visa category and hurts the American workers that it seeks to protect," Eshoo wrote.

[The Guardian](http://ucsdguardian.org/2016/11/06/u-s-legislators-send-napolitano-letters-against-outsourcing-ucsf-tech-jobs/) (<http://ucsdguardian.org/2016/11/06/u-s-legislators-send-napolitano-letters-against-outsourcing-ucsf-tech-jobs/>), a student newspaper at the UC San Diego campus, reported that U.S. Reps. Barbara Lee and Mark DeSaulnier, both California Democrats, also asked the university to reconsider its plan.