President of the United States of America The White House Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

The undersigned organizations, representing a variety of industries and small, medium and large businesses, are writing to express our concern that American job growth and the U.S. economy are being harmed by unprecedented delays and uncertainty surrounding L-1 visas for valued employees.

For over forty years, a cornerstone of business operations for those that do business both in the United States and abroad has been the ability to transfer managers, executives and specialized knowledge personnel across national boundaries in order to harmonize operations, expand markets, service clients, and share knowledge. In the United States, intracompany transfers are generally facilitated through the L-1 visa category. However, it has become increasingly difficult for companies to procure visas to transfer their existing employees to the United States to continue work on products, services, and projects. We are writing to urge the Administration to take action to correct this situation.

A significant concern is that an inconsistent and improperly narrowed definition of "specialized knowledge" is being used by the agencies to determine which employees qualify for L-1B status. Specialized knowledge may be best summarized as an advanced expertise about something a company values in its ability to do business. L-1B visas for specialized knowledge staff are an important tool in allowing companies to manage their workforce and intracompany talent pool without regard to borders. Appropriate use of the L-1B classification by careful and responsible employers plays a direct role in supporting job creation and job retention in the United States, as well as expanding advanced manufacturing, increasing exports, and encouraging foreign direct investment.

No intracompany transfer visa should be approved without eligibility under the controlling statute and regulations. Likewise, when visas for key staff <u>already employed within</u> an organization are inexplicably delayed or denied, it appears that agency resources are being spent inappropriately. Such delays or denials do not enhance compliance or enforcement and do nothing except disrupt carefully-laid business plans and create significant costs to the company and the American economy.

We urge you to take action to welcome these employees who are integral to our businesses. A strong economy that can continue to grow, innovate and create jobs is in our nation's interest; in the 21st century economy, intracompany transfers are an inherent part of promoting job growth and innovation here in the United States.

Cc: The Honorable John Bryson, Secretary of Commerce The Honorable Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security Respectfully submitted,

ABB Holdings Inc. Magna International Inc.

Accenture Manhattan Associates, Inc.
Air Products Marriott International, Inc.

American Council on International Personnel Microsoft Corporation

American Immigration Lawyers Association Mitsubishi International Corporation

Bobrick Washroom Equipment, Inc. Moog Inc

BP America MWV Corporation

BSI Group America Inc National Association of Manufacturers

Cargill, Incorporated National Foreign Trade Council

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Cognizant Technology Solutions Praxair, Inc

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DuPont Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association

eBay, Inc. Select Milk Producers, Inc.

EMC² Society for Human Resource Management

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts Tata America International Corporation

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Intel Corporation U.S. Chamber of Commerce

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J.R. GoodTimes, Inc. Yum! Brands