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Tech Billionaire Marc Benioff Donates Generously To Politicians And This Is What He Wants In Return



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Although Salesforce.com CEO Marc Benioff has been a big, visible supporter of President Obama and Nancy Pelosi, he says he's not a Democrat.

"I'm not a Democrat and I'm not a Republican. I'm an American," he [told TechCrunch's Mike Arrington](#). during



Business Insider/TechCrunch Disrupt/screen capture

Salesforce.com CEO Marc Benioff.

conference in San Francisco earlier this month. "If I like someone I'll give them money, but I'm not particularly close to anyone."

Records kept by political donation watchdog site OpenSecrets.org more or less support that. Although Democrats do seem to grab more funds from him, he has donated to the National Republican Congressional Committee and various specific Republicans.

He says whenever he meets with the politicians that he has backed, there are four things he asks of them:

1. Benioff wants the government to give more H1-B visas to the tech industry so that bright kids who study and graduate from US universities can stay and get jobs here. The visa should "stapled to them" when they graduate, he jested on stage.

H1-B visas let US companies bring in employees from overseas for jobs that require special skills. The US allows about 85,000 of these visas per year, [it says](#), and [they tend to run out of them within days of making them available every year](#).

2. He wants patent reform. "Patent trolls have become a huge problem in the industry. We had something phenomenal which was a bipartisan effort led by Eric Cantor, also supported by Nancy Pelosi, called the Innovation Act." It passed the House and went to the Senate where "Harry Reid killed it. ... Everybody supported it. The President supported it and the Senate killed it. It would have created patent reform in our industry," he says.

The House version of the bill is H.R. 3309. It was sent to the Senate in December 2013, and has been languishing in committee every since, [according to Congress.gov](#).

3. He wants companies to be allowed to bring back their stockpiles of overseas cash at a reasonable tax rate. "We need repatriation. Big companies, not Salesforce, have a lot of overseas because they have tried to avoid paying taxes. But that's not the point. For them to grow to buy companies, make change, they

understand repatriation rate, say 15-20%," he says.

Currently the tax rate is 35% to bring overseas cash back, the full-corporate rate. Fortune 500 corporations have stashed nearly \$2 trillion in offshore accounts, says think tank Citizens for Tax Justice. And tech companies [have some of the biggest tax hoards](#).

5. He wants common sense fiscal reforms, such as those from the 2010 bipartisan committee known as [Simpson Bowles](#). "We need a greater financial security for our country. We need a balanced budget, things like Simpson Bowles need to pass so we can have confidence that entitlements are going forward."

So far, his requests has fallen on deaf ears, as none of these things seem likely to happen anytime soon.

But Benioff is nothing if not persistent. In January of this year, he was among a handful of billionaires that donated \$25,000 to a SuperPAC for Hillary Clinton, [Bloomberg reported at the time](#).

More: [Marc Benioff SuperPac Political Donations Tax Reform Patent Trolls Immigration Reform](#)

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