

April XX, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Minority Whip
United States House of Representatives
H-148, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Whip
United States House of Representatives
H-329, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders:

On behalf of the small and seasonal businesses in our districts, we urge you to include H-2B cap relief in any spending measure for the remainder of fiscal 2017. During much of fiscal 2016, well-vetted returning H-2B workers were exempt from the program's 66,000 statutory cap, but this provision expired at the end of the fiscal year. The House Appropriations Committee included the same relief in the FY17 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations bill.

The statutory allocation of 33,000 visas for the first half of FY17 was reached in early January and 33,000 cap for the remainder of the fiscal year was reached on March 13. Without prompt passage of cap relief, many employers in our states will be without the critical seasonal workforce they need to operate this spring and summer. These businesses may not be able to fulfill contracts, could be forced to turn away customers, and may, in turn, lay off American workers whose jobs are supported by H-2B workers. In some cases these businesses may even shut down their operations entirely as a result of their inability to hire H-2B employees.

The H-2B program is essential to employers who cannot find local workers to fill temporary jobs in seafood processing, horse training, hospitality and amusement parks, forestry, landscaping, circuses, carnivals, food concessionaires, swimming pool maintenance, golf courses, stone quarries, sugar refineries and other seasonal industries. Most of these seasonal businesses need H-2B workers to supplement their American workforce during the spring and summer. Because the program's annual 66,000 cap (33,000 for each half of the fiscal year) is not adequate to meet the demands of a growing economy, many seasonal businesses

will be shut out of the program, which will significantly harm these businesses, their American workers and the local economies that they serve.

The H-2B program relies on well-vetted workers who come to the U.S. for seasonal employment and then go home. These workers are not immigrants. They provide an opportunity for U.S. businesses to operate at a greater capacity, retain their full-time workers and contribute to their local economies. Seasonal workers help support many upstream and downstream jobs. Every H-2B worker is estimated to create and sustain 4.64 American jobs.

Relief for seasonal businesses that use the H-2B program is needed urgently. We urge you to include the H-2B cap relief provision passed by the House Appropriations Committee in any spending measure for the remainder of fiscal 2017. This relief is urgently needed so that small and seasonal businesses in our states can continue to operate, provide American jobs and contribute to our economy.

Sincerely,