

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 27, 2026

Dear Secretary Mullin and Secretary Sonderling,

We write on behalf of the seasonal businesses in our states that lack sufficient employees to support their operations and sustain their businesses. In light of these labor shortages, we respectfully urge the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Department of Labor (DOL), to use the authority Congress provided in the current Continuing Resolution to release the maximum allowable number of additional H-2B visas for Fiscal Year 2027. These visas will allow employers to supplement their U.S. workforce to keep their businesses open and provide additional certainty for their workforce planning decisions in the coming months.

Chronic labor shortages—faced by seasonal U.S. employers throughout the nation’s history—have evolved into a permanent structural challenge to the American workforce. As this need grows, so does the pressure on U.S. workers, whose employers’ workforce needs cannot be met with American workers alone. The H-2B program requires employers to actively recruit U.S. workers, who are intentionally prioritized by the program and receive demonstrated positive impacts from their seasonal colleagues. In fact, a 2020 Government Accountability Office report concluded that “counties with H-2B employers generally had lower unemployment rates and higher average weekly wages than counties that do not have any H-2B employers.”¹ Issuing supplemental H-2B visas in a timely manner will help alleviate these workforce shortages and, in doing so, will help American businesses and communities as well as sustain the jobs of American workers who rely on H-2B workers to support their duties during peak seasons.

It is important to note that most supplemental visas are set aside specifically for returning workers. Many returning workers go back to the same qualified employer season after season, becoming reliable members of their respective organizations who supplement and support U.S. workers. When the season ends, H-2B workers return to their home countries and then use the legal process to rejoin qualified U.S. employers for the next season. These experienced returning workers who properly adhere to this legal process are critical to the seasonal businesses that depend on them.

A timely analysis, issuance of a rule, and release of these authorized visas will allow the supplemental tranche of H-2B visas to meet the seasonal market demand when they are most needed. We thank you for your continued support in recognizing the vital benefits these seasonal temporary work visas provide to the economy, and we are hopeful that the maximum allowable

¹ *H-2B VISAS: Additional Steps Needed to Meet Employers’ Hiring Needs and Protect U.S. Workers*, GAO-20-230, U.S. Government Accountability Office, April 2020, pp. 13–14.

number of FY27 supplemental visas will be promptly released pursuant to congressional authority, consistent with the practice as the DHS applied last year and in previous years.

Sincerely,

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