

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 22, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
235 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
326 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, McCarthy and Schumer:

We write to you today regarding the H-2B temporary guest worker program. As all of you are aware, we have been working in a bipartisan, bicameral fashion for years to find an acceptable, permanent legislative solution to the problems plaguing this program. Our work has had one goal: to provide the appropriate amount of non-immigrant, temporary workers needed to supplement our American workforce and sustain our economy.

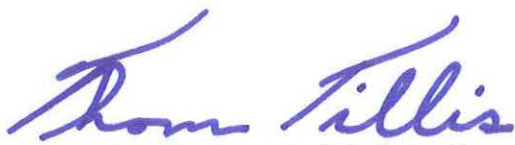
As recent filings show, there is no doubt that the statutory cap of 66,000, which was set more than three decades ago, is wholly inadequate to meet the demands of today's seasonal businesses. Recently, due to the strong national economy, employers have struggled to find U.S. workers for seasonal positions which are, on average, 6-9 month jobs. As such, there has been a marked uptick in the number of seasonal employers that, as a last resort, turn to the H-2B guest worker program for the employees they need to sustain their businesses during peak times. This increased demand, coupled with Congress's inability to meaningfully reform the program to meet the economy's needs, has caused an increasingly urgent issue of visa scarcity where employers are simply unable to attain sufficient workers to meet their labor demands.

In fact, this year, shortly after midnight on January 1, 2019, the Department of Labor's iCERT system, through which employers seeking H-2B workers request temporary labor certifications -- a necessary step in the H-2B application process--was inundated with a record number of requests and almost immediately crashed. In the brief moments before system failure, iCERT received in excess of 97,000 applications for the 33,000 available visas for the second half of the fiscal year. The iCERT System's failure is a direct and predictable result of Congress' inability to address the insufficient availability of H-2B visas.

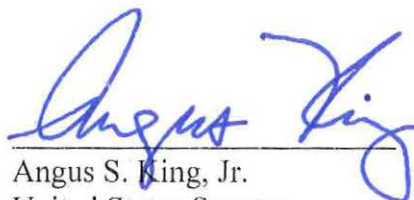
If significant and permanent H-2B cap relief is not provided, there will be severe consequences for seasonal businesses and our economy generally. Several seasonal businesses denied access to the program due to the insufficient cap have already been forced to scale back their operations, cancel or default on contracts, lay off full-time U.S. workers, and, in some cases, shutter their operations entirely. Continuing with the status quo of failing to reform the H-2B program will only result in more closures or scale backs for these businesses. In any agreement to end the current partial lapse in government funding, we owe our constituents, and seasonal business owners relying on this vital program, a thoughtful and lasting legislative solution to the H-2B visa shortage.

We look forward to working with you on this issue, and we are hopeful that you will include a meaningful solution to the H-2B guest worker shortage in any government funding agreement.

Sincerely,



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress



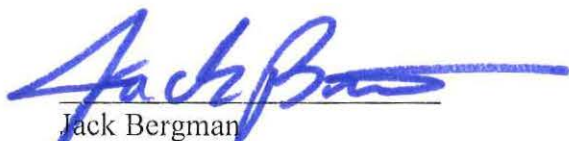
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



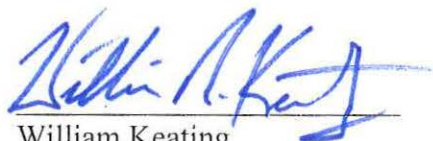
Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress

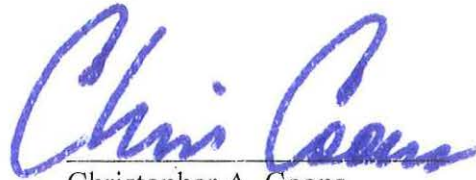


William Keating  
Member of Congress





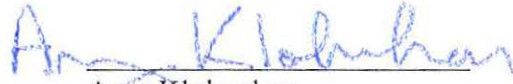
Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



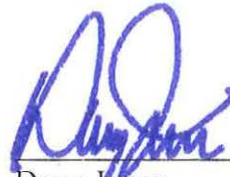
M. Michael Rounds  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Michael B. Enzi  
United States Senator



Doug Jones  
United States Senator



Cory Gardner  
United States Senator



Tina Smith  
United States Senator



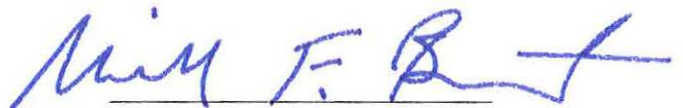
Todd Young  
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Rob Portman  
United States Senator



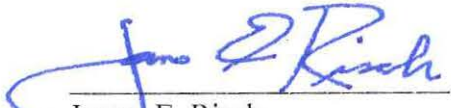
Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

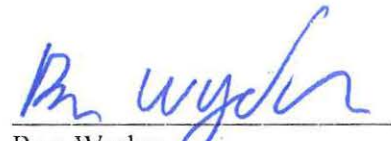



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator



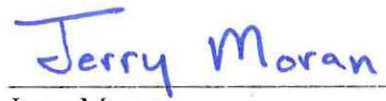
Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

  
James E. Risch  
United States Senator

  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

  
John Barrasso  
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Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator

  
Jerry Moran  
United States Senator

  
Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator

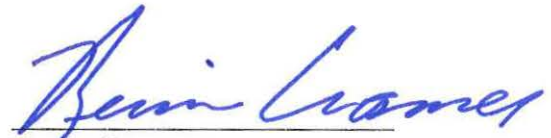
  
Pat Roberts  
United States Senator


  
Lindsey Graham  
United States Senator

  
Tim Scott  
United States Senator

  
Mike Crapo  
United States Senator

  
Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
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Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator

  
Roger F. Wicker  
United States Senator



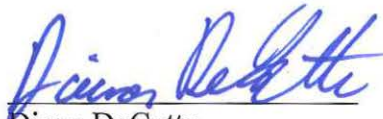
Michael McCaul  
Member of Congress



Robert Wittman  
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John R. Carter  
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



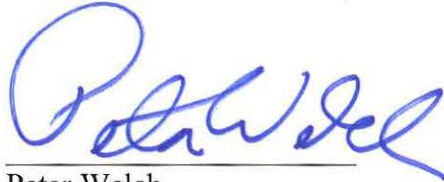
C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
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H. Morgan Griffith  
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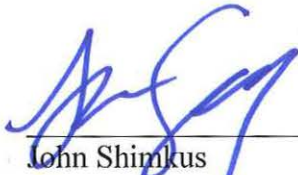


Tom Cole  
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Susan W. Brooks  
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John Shimkus  
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Bill Flores  
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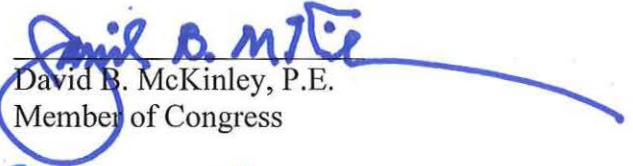
Blaine Luetkemeyer  
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Bill Huizenga  
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Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



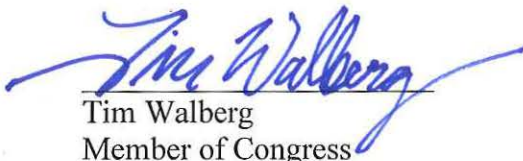
David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress



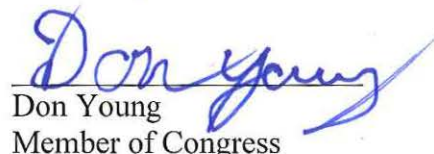
Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress



Chris Collins  
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Tim Walberg  
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Don Young  
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Bill Johnson  
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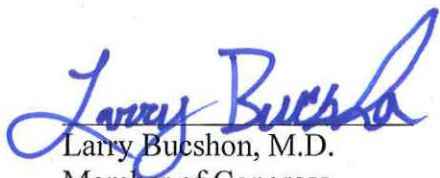
Steven M. Palazzo  
Member of Congress



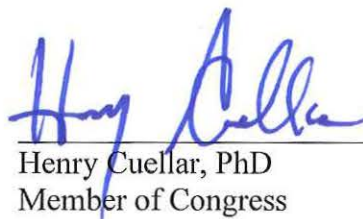
Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



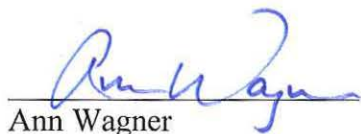
Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Henry Cuellar, PhD  
Member of Congress



Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress



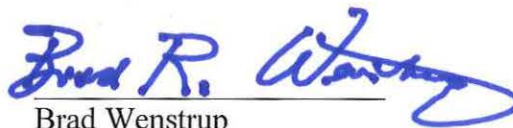
Garret Graves  
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Frank Lucas  
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Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup  
Member of Congress



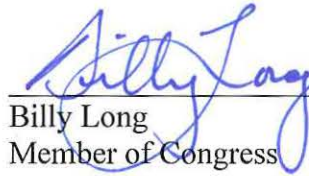
Andy Barr  
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



Billy Long  
Member of Congress



Ken Buck  
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Robert Latta  
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K. Michael Conaway  
Member of Congress



Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



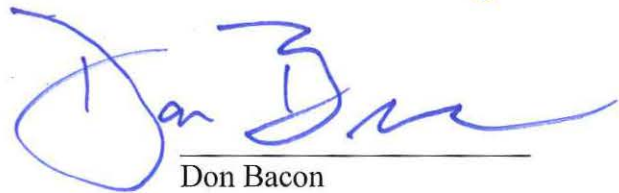
Thomas Massie  
Member of Congress



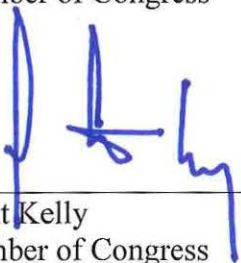
Kelly Armstrong  
Member of Congress



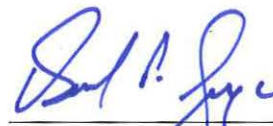
Anthony Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



Don Bacon  
Member of Congress

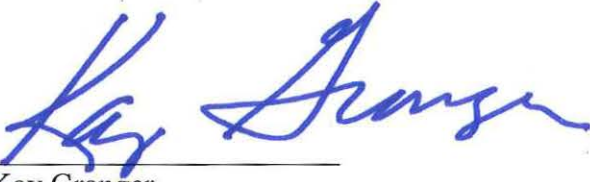


Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress





Kay Granger  
Member of Congress



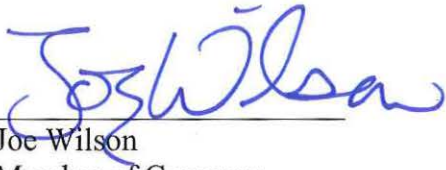
Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



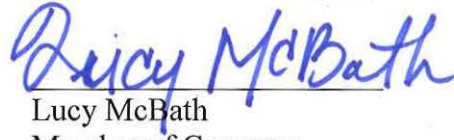
Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



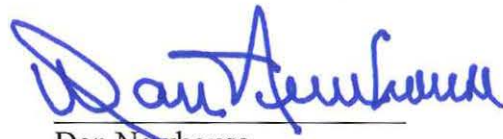
Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath  
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Steve Watkins  
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Dan Newhouse  
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Mike Bost  
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Dusty Johnson  
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Ron Estes  
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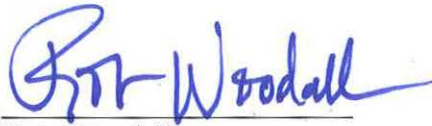
David Schweikert  
Member of Congress



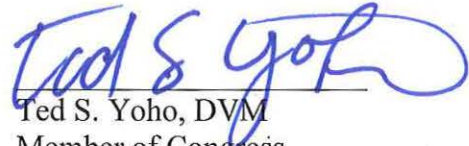
Roger Williams  
Member of Congress



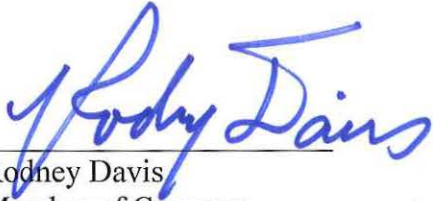
John H. Rutherford  
Member of Congress



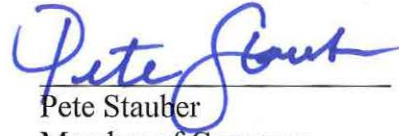
Rob Woodall  
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress



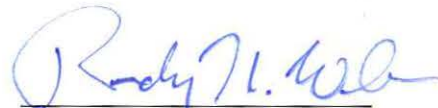
Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress




Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress



Bruce Westerman  
Member of Congress



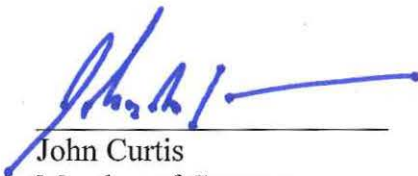
Randy Weber  
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John Moolenaar  
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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



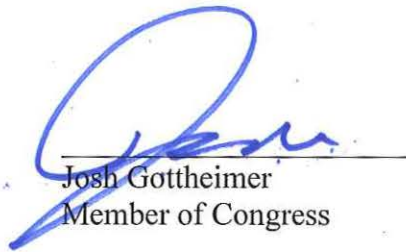
John Curtis  
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Lloyd Smucker  
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Paul Mitchell  
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Josh Gottheimer  
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Scott Tipton  
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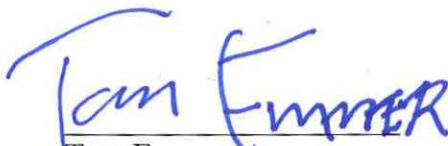
Michael Guest  
Member of Congress



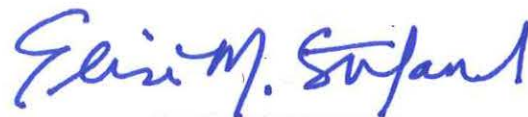
Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress



Roger Marshall, M.D.  
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Tom Emmer  
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Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress



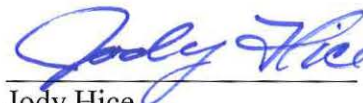
Ralph Norman  
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster  
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Chris Pappas  
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Jody Hice  
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David Kustoff  
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Neal P. Dunn, M.D.  
Member of Congress

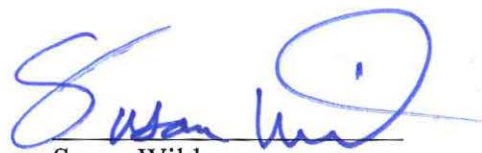
  
Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
Barry Loudermilk  
Member of Congress

  
Clay Higgins  
Member of Congress

  
Tom Malinowski  
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Tom Rice  
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Susan Wild  
Member of Congress