

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2015

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez  
Secretary of Labor  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

We write in support of a robust, comprehensive joint agency rule on the H-2B visa program. H-2B workers typically work in seasonal industries such as landscaping, construction, and golf course management, in addition to year-round industries like construction and hospitality. The H-2B visa program provides businesses across the United States with qualified, temporary foreign workers such as these who serve an integral part of our nation's economy.

Despite our support for H-2B visas, we have concerns about the lack of protections for workers brought to the United States under the program. While other temporary guest workers, such as farmworkers using H-2A visas, enjoy basic labor protections such as the right to receive written disclosure of job terms, transportation reimbursement, and wage guarantees, H-2B workers do not. Without such provisions, temporary foreign workers in the program are susceptible to abuses, including labor trafficking, because they cannot change employers and are not ensured that they will earn enough money to pay back the debts they incurred to come to the United States.

The Department of Labor attempted to address these concerns in 2012 by promulgating rules that would protect workers and preserve this program for the future. Unfortunately, that rule was blocked by the District Court for the Northern District of Florida and has not been implemented. Therefore, joint agency action is needed.

We fully support the protections the 2012 rule provided and urge you to make your new joint rule this year mirror the 2012 rule as much as possible. The critical worker protections we support include provisions to increase recruitment of U.S. workers, create a national registry of all H-2B job postings to help U.S. workers learn about available temporary jobs, and extend to workers needed labor protections such as wage guarantees.

We urge you to use this opportunity to strengthen protections for H-2B workers. A robust rule will enhance the H-2B program, prevent labor exploitation, and help Americans looking for work.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Lois Frankel  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



James P. McGovern  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Keith Ellison  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



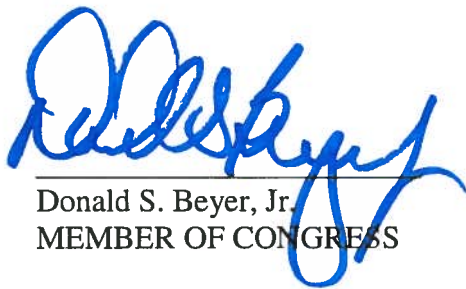
Brenda L. Lawrence  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



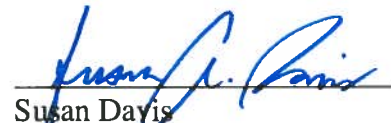
Jim McDermott  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Charles Rangel  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Donald S. Beyer, Jr.  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Susan Davis  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS