



July 23, 2021

The Honorable Jim McGovern
Chairman, House Rules Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, House Rules Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McGovern and Cole:

The National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) opposes amendment 155 regarding the H-2B visa program offered by Representative Mark Pocan to H.R. 4502 currently scheduled to be considered in the House Rules Committee on Monday, July 26th.

Established in 1886, NRCA is one of the nation's oldest trade associations and the voice of professional roofing industry employers worldwide. NRCA's nearly 4,000 member companies represent all segments of the industry, including contractors, manufacturers, distributors, consultants and other roofing industry employers in all 50 states. NRCA members typically are small, privately held companies with the average member employing 45 people and attaining sales of about \$4.5 million per year.

The H-2B program is critical to many employers who routinely cannot find local workers to fill job openings during peak seasons. The program enables businesses to operate at greater capacity during peak season, retain their full-time workers and contribute more to their local and state economies. Seasonal workers help support many upstream and downstream jobs, and every H-2B worker is estimated to create or sustain 4.64 American jobs according to a study commissioned by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

While the H-2B program is costly and complicated, many employers turn to it because it is the only way they can hire legal seasonal employees. Employers are required to undertake extensive recruitment of American workers, gain approval from government agencies and pay a premium wage, among other requirements. Unfortunately, the program's annual 66,000 statutory cap on visas is woefully inadequate to meet the demands of today's economy. NRCA is pleased that H.R. 4502 contains language that would provide additional visas beyond the cap for fiscal year 2022 and commends members of the Appropriations Committee for addressing this issue.

NRCA strongly opposes amendment 155 which would ban most construction industry employers from using the H-2B program unless the foreign workers hired are members of a union. NRCA represents both union and non-union employers and supports policies that carefully balance the needs of employers and labor. Given that less than 5% of the roofing industry is unionized, this

amendment would effectively prohibit most roofing contractors from participating in the H-2B program. If this amendment is adopted, many employers in the construction industry will be shut out of obtaining the workers they need, causing them to turn away customers and reduce the level of work for their American workers. NRCA is pleased to work with lawmakers on language that addresses specific concerns relating to the hiring of H-2B workers, but effectively banning the entire roofing industry is not acceptable and would hurt our economy. Moreover, without access to the H-2B program, reputable contractors will be put at more of disadvantage against employers who make little or no effort to follow the law.

This amendment will harm construction employers who do their best to abide by the rules and reward those who do not. The existence of unscrupulous employers who work in the underground economy is already a severe problem. NRCA stands ready to work with lawmakers on how to effectively address legitimate concerns without making existing problems worse.

Thank you for your consideration of NRCA's views on this important issue. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Duane Musser, NRCA's vice president of government relations, at 202-546-7584 or dmusser@nrca.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Reid Ribble". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Reid Ribble
Chief Executive Officer