



June 20, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker,

The National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) urges the House to approve immigration reform that addresses basic U.S. security and economic needs. Regarding the proposals to be voted on this week, NRCA opposes the Securing America's Future Act (H.R. 4760) because it will drastically reduce legal immigration and harm economic growth. NRCA supports the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act (H.R. 6136), which includes robust border security improvements and other positive reforms to immigration policy, as incremental progress towards further reforms that are necessary to sustain a strong economy.

Immigration reform that provides sufficient legal immigration to meet the workforce needs of the roofing industry is vital to addressing the chronic workforce shortages now reaching crisis proportions and boosting economic growth. The shortage of qualified workers is the most significant limitation on the ability of roofing industry employers to grow their businesses, with lost economic growth estimated at \$3.6 billion to \$7.2 billion in our industry annually. Moreover, workforce shortages are expected to become even more acute due to an aging workforce, current educational trends and ongoing rebuilding efforts from hurricanes and other disasters. This situation exists despite the good, family-sustaining jobs offered in our industry (the 2017 median pay for roofing workers was \$18.74 per hour according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

NRCA opposes the Securing America's Future Act (H.R. 4760) because it would reduce legal immigration by an estimated 25 to 40 percent, further exacerbating workforce shortages in our industry and harming economic growth. We agree with the bill's authors that the security and economic needs of U.S. citizens should be paramount in immigration policy, and we support the bill's goals of reducing illegal immigration through strengthened border security and improved workplace enforcement through an expansion of the E-Verify program. However, it is imperative immigration reform recognize the need for legal immigration in sectors like roofing when jobs will otherwise go unfilled as they are currently.

NRCA supports the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act (H.R. 6136) as an incremental step because it would begin to reform immigration policy to address security and economic needs. First, it would significantly expand and improve border security, one of many aspects of immigration reform that is long overdue. Second, it would address the situation of "Dreamers" (unauthorized individuals brought to the U.S. as minor children) in a balanced manner, one of the

most urgent necessities of immigration policy. Third, it includes reforms that would begin reprioritizing the allocation of visas to better match our economic and workforce needs. We have concerns regarding specific provisions of this bill as well as the overall impact on legal immigration, which will need to be further addressed in the future. But the bill is a good start to address immigration policy, and we urge House members to move the process forward by supporting this bill when it comes to the floor for a vote.

NRCA reiterates its support for Congress to address additional reforms in 2018 beyond those being considered this week. NRCA supports the Extending Status Protection for Eligible Refugees (ESPERER) Act (H.R. 4184), bipartisan legislation to allow qualified persons who received Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to adjust to legal permanent resident status. This bill would allow individuals from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti who have been working *legally* in the U.S. for many years to continue contributing to their communities and our economy. There are currently many individuals working within the roofing industry under TPS, and requiring these individuals to return to their native countries due to the rescinding of TPS will further exacerbate existing workforce shortages. NRCA urges Congress to address this urgent issue by approving H.R. 4184 or similar legislation in 2018.

As a next step, Congress needs to consider visa reforms to address the workforce shortages in roofing and other construction industries given the strength of the economy and historically low unemployment rate. Visa reforms to address workforce needs should be governed by market forces; ensure employers undertake efforts to hire U.S. workers first; be easy for employers to use; and enable job creators to obtain the workers needed to meet demand and grow their businesses and the economy. It is imperative Congress address visa reform that fully addresses the workforce needs of the construction industry, which are vital to sustaining long-term economic growth.

As the debate over immigration reform continues, NRCA looks forward to working with lawmakers to develop balanced solutions that fully fix our broken immigration system and provide for robust economic growth in the roofing industry. Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important issue. For more information, please contact Duane Musser in NRCA's Washington, D.C., office 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

cc. All Members of the U.S. House of Representatives