



June 11, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representative
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The National Roofing Contractors Association urges your support for addressing critical workforce needs by strengthening the H-2B seasonal visa program in the FY 2025 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. NRCA supports a bipartisan amendment by Reps. Harris and Pingree that will be offered at the full committee mark-up to help alleviate workforce shortages by directing DHS to provide supplemental H-2B visas in line with economic demand.

The H-2B program is critical to numerous employers, including many NRCA members, who often cannot find local workers to fill job openings during peak season. The program provides an opportunity for businesses to operate at greater capacity, retain their full-time workers and contribute to local and state economies. Seasonal workers help support many upstream and downstream jobs. According to a study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, every H-2B worker is estimated to sustain or create 4.64 American jobs.

Unfortunately, the program's annual 66,000 cap is woefully inadequate to meet the demands of today's economy in which workforce shortages have become increasingly severe. Demand for H-2B visas has been far above the cap in recent years which has resulted in many employers being shut out of obtaining the workers needed to meet consumer demand. Absent legislative relief from the statutory cap, many employers will again be forced to turn away customers and sacrifice opportunities to expand economic activity.

The H-2B program is extremely costly and complicated, yet employers turn to it because it is the only option for hiring legal seasonal workers to meet peak needs. The program requires employers to undertake extensive recruitment of American workers, gain approval from four government agencies and pay a premium wage.

As the committee moves forward with the FY 2025 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, NRCA supports the Harris-Pingree amendment to change "may" to "shall" with respect to the Returning Worker Exemption needed to increase the number of visas for FY 2025 beyond the

previous two years and will expedite the issuance and processing of such visas, thus providing both workers and employers with increased certainty needed to plan for the upcoming peak seasonal labor needs. Adoption of this amendment is critical for continued economic growth needed to meet consumer demand within the roofing industry as well as the broader U.S. economy.

Thank you for your careful 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 'McKay Daniels', written in a cursive style.

McKay Daniels
Chief Executive Officer

CC: All Members of the House Appropriations Committee