



One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 1, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Secretary Walsh:

I write to request that you release the maximum allowable number of additional H-2B visas for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) and that you prioritize processing pending H-2B applications in advance of the April 1st hiring period.

As our Nation's economy continues to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, it is imperative that industries such as tourism and hospitality, landscaping, seafood processing, and fairs and carnivals are properly staffed to meet unprecedented demand. H-2B workers play an integral role in supporting American businesses, and without sufficient employees, businesses may have to scale back operations. This negatively impacts revenues and risks the jobs of American workers at these establishments.

As you know, the demand for workers already exceeds the number of available visas. In January, the Department of Labor announced it received 7,875 applications for temporary labor certifications from employers, which would cover 136,555 open positions in the United States.¹ This is more than four times the number of visas permitted under the statutory cap. While I appreciate the action already taken to release 20,000 additional H2-B visas for the first half of the FY22 hiring period, more are needed.

Releasing all additional authorized H2-B visas and expeditiously process pending H-2B applications will help ensure workers can begin working on April 1, 2022, just in time for many businesses' peak season. I urge you to act to meet the needs of these businesses in the interest of our Nation's economy.

¹ January 7, 2022. *OFLC Publishes List of Randomized H-2B Applications Submitted January 1-3 for Employers Seeking H-2B Workers Starting April 1, 2022*, Dept. of Labor, Jan. 7, 2022, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/foreign-labor/news>.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Chairman