

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

February 21, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

We write today on behalf of North Carolina employers to request that the Administration expeditiously release all 64,716 H-2B visas which it is authorized to release for the upcoming season. As you know, the Fiscal Year 2020 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations provides the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the authority to lift the existing H-2B visa cap. DHS has exercised its authority to release additional visas during the past three years, including 30,000 additional visas in Fiscal Year 2019.

Since 2010, North Carolina's population has grown 8.5%, and between 2017 and 2018, North Carolina's population grew 1.1%, adding around 113,000 people. Unemployment currently stands at 3.8%. North Carolina is in the top-10 states for H-2B workers with 5,074 positions being certified for FY 2019. This is a nearly 47% increase in certifications for North Carolina businesses compared to only 5 years ago in FY 2014.

By providing relief to employers through the H-2B visa program, the Administration has the opportunity to create jobs for more North Carolinians and Americans. Each H-2B worker supports approximately 4.6 U.S. workers. This means that, in FY 2019, the 5,074 H-2B workers certified for North Carolina could have supported 23,340 North Carolina workers.

At the end of the filing deadline for Foreign Labor Application Gateway System, the Office of Foreign Labor Certification received 5,677 H-2B applications that requested 99,362 workers. In January 2017, shortly before President Trump took office, the Department of Labor received 2,993 H-2B applications requesting 53,220 workers. This represents a 46% increase in demand. With the unemployment rate at a 50-year low, and in the midst of the longest economic expansion in U.S. history, these employers are struggling to find seasonal workers in this booming economy.

Without supplemental cap relief, two thirds of these businesses will not receive critically needed seasonal workers. By releasing all 64,716 H-2B visas available, this Administration can ensure that the needs of North Carolina's economy are met, and vacant jobs are filled.

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Your swift release of these additional visas will provide the certainty and the security these businesses need to continue the work of strengthening our economy.

Thank you for your acute attention to this critical concern. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

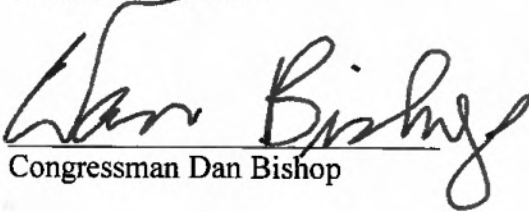
Sincerely,



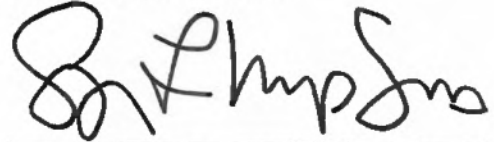
Senator Thom Tillis



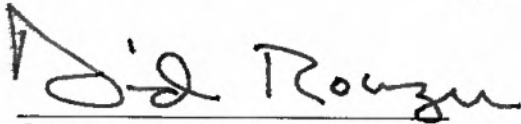
Senator Richard Burr



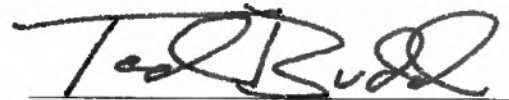
Congressman Dan Bishop



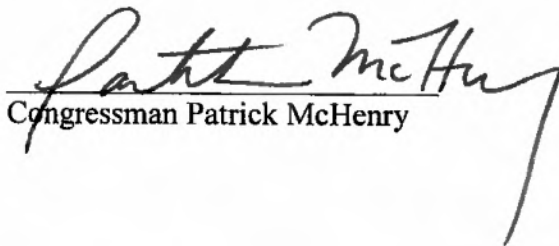
Congressman Greg Murphy, M.D.



Congressman David Rouzer



Congressman Ted Budd



Congressman Patrick McHenry