

**ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

1ST DISTRICT, VIRGINIA



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**Congress of the United States**

**House of Representatives**

**Washington, DC 20515**

January 16, 2020

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By ESEC at 8:03 am, Jan 21, 2020

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

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

I am writing to bring to your attention an important issue facing Virginia small businesses. Several seasonal industries including, seafood, landscape, hotel and tourism currently rely on temporary H-2B workers to supplement the local workforce.

Unfortunately, without timely and meaningful H-2B visa cap relief by the Department of Homeland Security, seasonal businesses will have to reduce operations, lose contracts, lay off full-time U.S. employees and, even in some cases close their doors permanently.

Specifically, as it pertains to seafood in Virginia, without seasonal labor, businesses in rural areas run the risk of not being able to process baitfish, crabs and oysters this season. Hundreds of million in revenue and thousands of local Virginia jobs---managers, supervisors, truck drivers and office personnel---rely on a working H-2B system.

I urge you to use the authority authorized in the recently passed FY2020 Further Consolidated Appropriations bill to release additional visas as soon as possible to meet the demand and avoid significant business losses to these critical industries. Thank you for your attention to this timely matter.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Wittman

cc: Acting Director Ken Cuccinelli, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services