



CLUB
MANAGERS
ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA



June 18, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Permanently Increasing the Annual Cap on H-2B Temporary Non-Agricultural Work Visas

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Capito and Ranking Members Leahy and Tester:

On behalf of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Club Managers Association of America, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, National Club Association, and National Golf Course Owners Association, we write to respectfully request that you include language in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations legislation to permanently increase the number of H-2B work visas permitted each fiscal year.

Golf is a powerful economic driver throughout the country, sustaining two million American jobs with \$55.6 billion in annual wage income. Seasonal employers, like golf, rely on a trained, legal, and available temporary non-agricultural workforce to fill jobs that would otherwise go vacant in order to keep their doors open for business and support American jobs. Under current law, the number of H-2B temporary non-agricultural workers is capped at 66,000, equally divided for each half of the fiscal year. This congressionally-mandated cap is inadequate to meet the seasonal needs of small businesses in many sectors, including golf.

Congress and the Administration have already recognized that the demand for temporary non-agricultural workers currently outstrips the supply of H-2B visas. In the FY18 omnibus spending law passed in March, Congress granted the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security discretion to temporarily increase the number of H-2B visas for the current fiscal year. Under this authority, Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, upon consultation with Secretary of the Department of Labor Alexander Acosta, announced on May 25 that the agency would issue an additional 15,000

H-2B visas for the remainder of the year. Notably, this was not the first time an H-2B visa shortage necessitated such Congressional action. Unfortunately, 15,000 was only a small portion of the workers needed nationwide. Due to this low number, DHS again resorted to a lottery to determine which companies would receive desperately needed H-2B workers.

WAG supports efforts to improve protections for American workers and visa holders and to ensure the effective enforcement of labor and employment laws. However, even with increased wages being offered today, we continue to face labor shortages of seasonal workers across all industries participating in the H-2B program. A permanent H-2B solution is essential to meeting the ongoing needs of seasonal small businesses across the nation, including golf. This will in turn contribute to the U.S. economy – every H-2B worker creates and sustains 4.64 American jobs. The golf industry urges Congress to take action this year to include language in appropriations legislation increasing the H-2B visa cap to ensure that seasonable businesses have the workforce necessary to stay in business and continue supporting American employees and state and local economies.

Sincerely,

American Society of Golf Course Architects
Club Managers Association of America
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
National Club Association
National Golf Course Owners Association