

Shawn McBurney, Co-Chair
American Hotel &
Lodging Association

Laurie Flanagan, Co-Chair
American Nursery & Landscape
Association

Professional Landcare
Network

Executive Committee:

American Horse Council
American Moving & Storage Association
American Rental Association
American Sugar Cane League
American Trucking Associations
Asian American Hotel Owners Association
Associated Builders and Contractors
Associated General Contractors of America
Brick Industry Association
Building Stone Institute
Crawfish Processors Alliance
Essential Worker Immigration Coalition
Federation of Employers and Workers of America
Forest Resources Association
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
ImmigrationWorks USA
Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions
International Association of Fairs and Expositions
International Franchise Association
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Realtors
National Club Association
National Council of Agricultural Employers
National Electrical Contractors Association
National Federation of Independent Business
National Fisheries Institute
National Hispanic Landscape Alliance
National Restaurant Association
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Ski Areas Association
National Thoroughbred Racing Association
Outdoor Amusement Business Association
Society of American Florists
Tree Care Industry Association
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Utility Sprayer Alliance

PRINCIPLES FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

About the H-2B Program

- The H-2B program is essential for seasonal businesses that cannot fill temporary jobs with American workers despite intensive recruitment efforts. Seasonal non-agricultural industries that use the H-2B program include seafood processing, food processing, horse training, restaurants, hotels, forestry, landscaping, carnivals and amusement parks, and stone quarries. Because the program is expensive, time-consuming and involves four government agencies, employers only turn to the program if they are unable to find legal local workers.
- The H-2B program is important to American workers whose year round positions are reliant upon seasonal laborers during peak seasons. In companies that use the H-2B program, both American full time and H-2B temporary seasonal workers are well compensated; often well above the federal minimum wage and the prevailing wage.
- For H-2B workers, the program provides well-paying seasonal jobs that allow them to provide for their families and still maintain their homes in their native countries. Many of these workers voluntarily return to the same employer year after year.
- The H-2B program is important to the U.S. economy. Without access to a legal source of seasonal labor, employers will be forced to lay off American workers, scale back on vehicle, equipment and supply purchases and perhaps even close their businesses.

Immigration Reform Principles

- Immigration reform must maintain a viable seasonal worker program along the lines of the existing H-2B program for non-agricultural workers.
- Immigration reform should maintain the current protections for American and H-2B workers and not impose costly burdensome new requirements on employers who use the H-2B program such as those created under the temporarily blocked Department of Labor wage methodology and program rules.
- Wage rates required to be paid to H-2B and similarly employed American workers shall be based on economic realities and local markets. Wage rates should not be based on arbitrary formulas that are well above wage rates paid in the local labor market.
- The H-2B returning worker exemption should be re-instated and there should be an expedited process for consular visa processing for H-2B returning workers.
- The number of participants in the program should be market-based, allowing the number of participants to fluctuate up or down based on economic needs.
- Immigration reform should provide sufficient resources for federal agencies to process H-2B applications in a timely manner. States should have an appropriate role in program administration.
- H-2B applications should not be released to the public to protect the confidential business information submitted by employers and to prevent the businesses from being harassed by outside organizations.
- The Coalition supports strong enforcement of all the program rules, including the increased security procedures at US State Department consulate offices. Employers will continue to notify officials when they become aware of workers that may have not complied with the terms of their visas.