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National Association of Landscape Professionals

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American Hotel &
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DC Legislative and Regulatory Services

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Forest Resources Association

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Leading Builders of America

Mackinac Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

National Association of Landscape Professionals

Outdoor Amusement Business Association

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Travel Association

November xx, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Julie Su
Secretary of Labor
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Secretaries Mayorkas and Su:

The H-2B Workforce Coalition is comprised of small and seasonal businesses across the country owned and operated by thousands of employers and their representatives from industries such as lodging, landscaping, seafood, restaurants, tourism, equine, forestry, mobile outdoor amusement, golf courses, and others. Our members are seasonal businesses that rely on the H-2B visa program to supplement their U.S. workforce during seasonal surge and peak business needs.

On behalf of our members, we thank you for the recent announcement about the Departments' plan to make available 64,716 supplemental H-2B visas for fiscal 2024. These visas will provide employers the ability to better handle their labor challenges, as they will have additional certainty regarding their workforce planning decisions in the coming months. We urge you to promptly publish a temporary rule implementing release of these supplemental visas.

We would also like to express support for the Administration's efforts to increase access to H-2B visas for foreign nationals from the Northern Triangle countries and Haiti. We will continue to work with these foreign governments to help diminish the irregular migration from these countries by helping to streamline the application process for foreign workers from these countries.

We are grateful that the Administration's action recognizes the dire shortage of seasonal labor in the U.S. Many employers turn to the H-2B program to meet their workforce needs to not only sustain their businesses, but also to support their American workers. Every H-2B worker supports 4.64 U.S. jobs.¹ Furthermore, a 2020 General Accountability Office report concluded that "counties with H-2B employers generally had lower unemployment rates and higher average weekly wages than counties that do not have any H-2B employers."² The H-2B program places many requirements on employers to recruit U.S. workers, and our members try to find as many U.S. workers as they can. In these unprecedented times, there are simply not enough workers to meet the seasonal workforce needs of U.S. employers. The most current employment data illustrate the workforce struggles of seasonal businesses nationwide. The Bureau Labor

¹ Zavodny, Madeline. *Immigration and American Jobs*. American Enterprise Institute, 15 Dec. 2011, www.aei.org/research-products/working-paper/immigration-and-american-jobs/seek.

² United States, Congress, "H-2B VISAS: Additional Steps Needed to Meet Employers' Hiring Needs and Protect U.S. Workers." *H-2B VISAS: Additional Steps Needed to Meet Employers' Hiring Needs and Protect U.S. Workers*, GAO-20-230; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2020, pp. 13–14.

Statistics reported that during September 2023, the unemployment rate continued to be 3.8% and average annual hourly wages increased.³

Again, thank you for acknowledging the seasonal labor crisis and unprecedented demand that led to the Administration's planned release of 64,719 H-2B supplemental visas for FY24. We encourage you to promptly promulgate a temporary final rule implementing the announcement.

Sincerely,



Andrew Bray
Chair



Ashley McNeil
Vice Chair

³ "Employment Situation Summary - 2023 M09 Results." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 6 Oct. 2023, www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm.