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March 11, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write to you on behalf of seasonal businesses in New Hampshire to request that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immediately release additional H-2B visa slots to ensure that employers are able to hire and meet the growing demands of their businesses in the spring and summer months ahead. Many seasonal employers in my Congressional district were unable to accommodate their workforce needs before the H-2B cap was met on February 12, 2021.

The H-2B visa program is critically important to seasonal employers such as hotels, restaurants, landscaping companies, amusement parks and many others. Importantly, New Hampshire's tourism industry is an integral part of our economy and generates more than \$5 billion in economic activity every year. With businesses looking to safely reopen this summer and homeowners looking to invest in landscaping projects and other home improvements, ensuring that Granite State employers have access to additional H-2B visa slots is imperative. The inability for these employers to access additional visas will likely lead to declining new work opportunities and scaling down capacity for projects at a time when employers are looking to bounce back from the economic downturn incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On December 27, 2020, former President Donald Trump signed the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021* into law, which allows the Department of Homeland Security to issue additional H-2B visas following consultation with the Department of Labor. This legislation provided DHS with limited cap relief and I request that your Department exercise this relief to ensure that employers can staff up and meet the growing demands of our tourism and hospitality industries. Our efforts and the leadership of President Biden to crush the COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly lead to increased interest amongst Americans to travel and participate in our tourism economy, and it is of critical importance that our businesses be able to effectively accommodate this demand.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and I look forward to working in partnership with your Department to provide relief for employers in New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress