Congress of the United States

**Washington, D.C. 20510**

March 17, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We write to request that the Department of Homeland Security release additional visas under the H-2B visa program, which already reached capacity on February 12, 2021. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations bill for FY 2021 grants DHS the authority to release up to 69,320 additional H-2B visas for FY21. We request that DHS continue processing applications until it has exhausted the additional allotment to remedy inequities in the program and support Colorado’s businesses and communities in need.

Colorado is one of the highest per capita users of the H-2B program in the United States. New and reoccurring challenges face our nation as we recover economically from the COVID-19 pandemic. Industries in Colorado continue to have significant workforce shortages due to increased demand for public and private outdoor spaces and seasonality of work, leaving many employers lacking the labor needed to bounce back from a challenging year.

The H-2B program offers an option to employers when there is a shortage of American workers who are not willing to take temporary jobs. The program is a lifeline for small businesses that need temporary workers to keep their doors open and keep American workers employed. The ability of employers to count on seasonal labor supports Main Street businesses hardest hit by the pandemic and is key to job growth and economic recovery for local communities across the country.

We urge you to release the rest of the discretionary H-2B visas in order to further aid and stimulate Colorado’s economic recovery.

Respectfully,

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/s/ Michael F. Bennet /s/ John Hickenlooper

United States Senator United States Senator

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/s/ Joe Neguse /s/ Doug Lamborn

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/s/ Jason Crow /s/ Diana DeGette

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/s/ Ed Perlmutter

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