

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 30, 2015

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

We write in support of a robust, comprehensive joint agency final rule on the H-2B foreign labor certification program. Our constituents include business owners who depend on the H-2B program for temporary nonagricultural labor, but also qualified U.S. workers who need access to jobs and strong worker protections. We urge you to work with the Department of Homeland Security to promulgate a comprehensive rule for the H-2B visa program that enables the program to help business owners while still ensuring strong protections for all workers.

As you know, the Department of Labor announced a final rule in February 2012 to improve the H-2B visa program. However, that 2012 rule was never implemented after it was preliminarily enjoined by the District Court for the Northern District of Florida in April 2012.

We fully support the added protections the 2012 rule provided and urge you to make your new joint rule mirror the 2012 rule as much as possible. These important worker protections include provisions to increase recruitment of U.S. workers, the creation of a national registry of all H-2B job postings to help U.S. workers learn of available temporary jobs, and the extension to U.S. workers of benefits such as transportation costs and prevailing wages currently available to H-2B workers. We appreciate that the joint interim final rule contains strong worker protections, and we urge you to continue this approach when the rule is finalized.

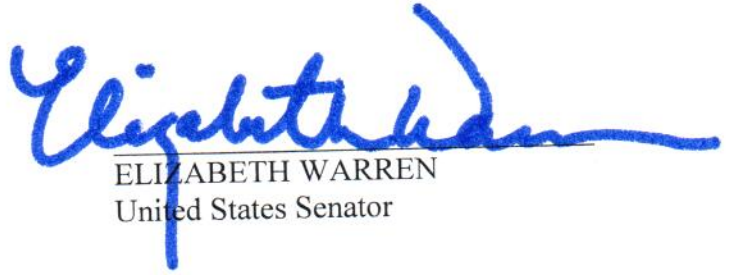
We recognize that the H-2B program provides valuable, qualified workers to many businesses across the United States and support the continuation of the program. However, we urge you to use this opportunity to strengthen protections for both H-2B and U.S. workers. A robust joint rule that includes strong worker protections will enhance the H-2B program, help protect H-2B workers from exploitation, and help Americans looking for work.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senator



JEFF MERKLEY
United States Senator



RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator



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