

H-2B WORKFORCE COALITION

H-2B Workforce Coalition Urges Congress to Ensure Returning Worker Exemption Remains in Force for Duration of CR

WASHINGTON, DC, Sept. 23— The H-2B Workforce Coalition remains optimistic that the Continuing Resolution for FY 2017 will contain language to help ensure hundreds of small, seasonal businesses have access to essential temporary labor, by ensuring the returning worker exemption stays in force for the duration of the temporary funding measure. A potential gap in the effective dates prior to the passage of the FY 2017 appropriations bills falls just before the beginning of visa processing for seasonal hiring in early 2017.

"We hope all members of Congress see through the rhetoric and understand the tremendous economic value of the H-2B visa program to American businesses and full time American employees," said Bob Johnson, president of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association and H2B Workforce Coalition partner. "Without the added flexibility an uninterrupted seasonal guest worker program will provide to U.S. employers, many businesses will be forced to cut contracts, scale back business operations, or take other actions that place full time American jobs at risk."

The returning worker exemption is a crucial element of the H-2B program that will help keep American small seasonal businesses in landscaping, forestry, hotel/lodging, entertainment and hospitality open and sustain American jobs. Studies show that 4.6 American jobs are sustained for every H-2B seasonal visa that is issued.