

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4305**

May 7, 2020

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

As you know, the economic shutdown set in motion by the coronavirus pandemic has had an unprecedented effect on the American worker. These effects are exacerbated by existing labor and immigration laws, which allow millions of foreign laborers to compete for jobs through guest worker programs. Therefore, we urge you to suspend the issuance of guest worker visas until unemployment returns to normal levels. We also ask that you permanently suspend the EB-5 immigrant visa program. By immediately suspending these programs, your Administration can drastically improve future employment prospects for American workers.

Your April 22, 2020 Executive Order to suspend a limited class of immigrant visas for sixty days was a step in the right direction. However, the greater threat to American workers remains the unaddressed guest worker programs.

The United States admits more than one million nonimmigrant guest workers every year. Meanwhile, over 30 million Americans are out of work, representing nearly one-fifth of our country's total workforce. Before the coronavirus pandemic ravaged our economy, the unemployment rate stood at 3.5 percent. With the unemployment rate at levels unseen since the Great Depression, our government should not be importing the competition of American workers.

In addition to the devastating unemployment figures, scores of businesses have had to cease operations. There will still be too few jobs for the millions of recently fired workers when regular activity resumes. Allowing foreign-born guest workers to fill jobs at a time like this is an injustice against unemployed Americans.

A number of these programs are particularly egregious. As service industry businesses remain shuttered due to social distancing restrictions, hundreds of thousands of waiters, bartenders, cooks, and managers have been jobless for months. They will be forced to compete for a limited number of positions with H-2B guest workers when venues reopen. While the H-2B program is capped at 66,000 workers per year, these workers demand significantly less compensation than an average American vying for the same job.

Skilled guest worker programs must be suspended as well. Soon, hundreds of thousands of college seniors will graduate with degrees but no job opportunities. Thousands of white-collar workers face broad, recurring layoffs. Throughout all of this, our country continues to import hundreds of thousands of guest workers to compete for white-collar jobs under the H-1B, L-1, and Optional Practical Training (OPT) programs. In 2019, the State Department issued over 265,000 visas between the H-1B and L-1 programs. The workers enrolled in these programs hold no unique skills relative to those held by American college graduates, but the cost of their services is significantly less. Incredibly, employers do not pay any payroll taxes for recent graduates working under the OPT program. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) could immediately put an end to this, an action which would free up at least 200,000 jobs for American graduates.

Finally, we urge you to rescind the exemption in your proclamation for the controversial and ineffective EB-5 investor visa, which has been overwhelmingly abused by Chinese nationals to buy American citizenship. This program concentrates vast financial resources into already wealthy parts of the country, which is completely contradictory to the stated justification for the program. It does nothing to elevate struggling parts of our country, much less hire Americans looking for work.

Americans are looking to the Federal Government for leadership. The coronavirus pandemic continues to wreak havoc to our health, economy, and society. You have cited the effect these programs have on our labor force and taken the initial steps to mitigate those negative impacts. We urge you to further use your legal authority and suspend substantially all temporary guest worker programs. Such action would provide the greatest possible protection for American workers and further exemplify your commitment to the economic prosperity of our great nation.

Sincerely,



---

Lance Gooden  
Member of Congress



---

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress



---

Louie Gohmert  
Member of Congress



---

Matt Gaetz  
Member of Congress



---

Michael Burgess, M.D.  
Member of Congress



---

Mo Brooks  
Member of Congress



---

Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress



---

Steve King  
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Eugene Scalia  
Secretary of Labor  
200 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20210

The Honorable Chad Wolf  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
245 Murray Lane SW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520