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**USHCC and NHLA Join Forces to Request Increase Cap for H-2B Seasonal Workers**  
*Organizations cite grave financial impacts on landscaping industry due to lack of visas.*

**Washington, DC - July 26, 2018-** The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) is proud to partner with the National Hispanic Landscape Alliance (NHLA) to encourage Congress to grant additional visas for seasonal workers entering the U.S. Both organizations express serious concerns for issues surrounding the H-2B visa program and the impact on companies who are not able to fill seasonal non-agricultural positions.

“The H-2B visa program, capped at 66,000 per year, is completely inadequate. This year the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has certified that there exists a bona fide shortage for more than 142,000 workers to fill seasonal jobs,” said NHLA Executive Director Ralph Egües. “Without access to seasonal workers, thousands of the nation’s leading landscape companies and other employers needing seasonal workers are forced to shrink operations and lay off American workers. The H-2B visa program provides an orderly and legal means for needed foreign workers to come to the US, work for a defined period, and then return to their home countries.”

As a result of the federal cap on seasonal worker visas, different industries across the nation have been negatively impacted by insufficient access to the H-2B program. As the largest employer of seasonal workers, the landscaping industry has been especially hampered by the sharp increase in demand for seasonal workers. This year, the USDOL received 81,600 applications, almost two and a half times the slots available for the second half of the year. According to the National Association of Landscape Professionals, the 15,000 additional visas added in May still does not come close to meeting demand.

“With an unemployment rate of 4 percent, our economy is facing labor shortages that are preventing American businesses from scaling. H-2B visas directly address this problem in a manner that increases wages for American workers while providing reputable employers access to needed willing workers,” said USHCC Interim President & CEO Fernand Fernandez. “There are more than twice as many H-2B visa requests as there are visas. We ask that our leaders in Congress respond to the needs of American employers and pass adequate H-2B visa cap relief.”

The H-2B program benefits both U.S. companies and foreign employees who come to the states looking for jobs. Through this program, companies are able to meet their seasonal demands therefore enabling landscape companies to grow and make a positive impact on the U.S. economy. Unfortunately, due to regulations enacted by the administration, the program has hindered companies throughout the country who depend on seasonal labor workers to not only make ends meet, but also deliver quality products and services.

### **About USHCC**

The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than 4.37 million Hispanic-owned businesses, that combined, contribute over \$700 billion to the American economy every year. It also advocates on behalf of 260 major American corporations and serves as the umbrella organization for more than 200 local chambers and business associations nationwide. For more information, please visit [ushcc.com](http://ushcc.com). Follow us on Twitter @USHCC.

### **About NHLA**

The National Hispanic Landscape Alliance is an association that facilitates and promotes the advancement of Hispanics as landscape industry professionals and leaders, and provides the more than half a million U.S. Hispanic landscaping professionals a voice in the national dialogue on environmentally responsible landscape practices, and a means through which to advocate on behalf of their businesses, the livelihood of their employees, and the quality of life in their communities.