



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

April 4, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Nielsen,

As the Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Texas, I request that you take immediate action and open the petition process under the H-2B Nonimmigrant Temporary Worker Program. This is critical for the Texas economy, and small and seasonal businesses that rely on the seasonal workers provided through the H-2B program in Texas.

It is clear that under the 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act you have the authority to approve petitions and adjudicate pending labor certifications. Your timely action is vital to the livelihoods of thousands of famers, shrimpers, and small businesses that rely on these temporary workers. While similar authority was granted in 2017, there was a delay in issuing these visas that resulted in many producers and family run businesses being left with a shortage of seasonal workers needed to operate.

Agriculture and related businesses are the second largest part of the economy in Texas. Specialty crop production, livestock operations, and fisheries create thousands of jobs throughout the United States. By taking action now to open the petition process, your assistance will not only help ensure that we continue to feed the world, but will allow Texans to create work opportunities for U.S. citizens that are the result of the jobs generated by our ability to have a seasonal support workforce.

Currently many agriculture and related entities are making final decisions on this season's production efforts. Your action on this matter will determine the economic success of many of these businesses, and the jobs they create.

I appreciate your attention to this critical matter, and urge your immediate approval of this request.

Sincerely,

Sid Miller
Commissioner