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## **H-2B WORKFORCE COALITION APPLAUDS FAVORABLE H-2B PROVISIONS IN END-OF-YEAR CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING LEGISLATION**

**Washington, D.C. – December 16, 2015** – The H-2B Workforce Coalition, an alliance of more than 40 various industry associations focused on protecting American workers by ensuring American small and seasonal employers have access to legal short-term temporary employees during peak business periods, issued the following statement supporting the favorable language to the H-2B visa waiver program in the Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The H-2B provisions will provide small businesses with the certainty they need to hire seasonal workers in high demand and operate their businesses efficiently and effectively while balancing the safety and security of our homeland. The Senate and House are expected to pass the end-of-year spending legislation this week, and the President is expected sign the bill into law.

### **H-2B provisions in the Omnibus Appropriations bill include:**

- Returning H-2B workers under certain conditions will be exempt from the annual 66,000 cap.
- The use of private wage surveys, not allowed under the new H-2B wage rule, will be permitted. H-2B wages are also addressed.
- Seasonal is clearly defined as 10 months, as opposed to nine months in new H-2B program rule.
- DOL is blocked from implementing the provisions of the new H-2B program rule related to corresponding employment and the ¾ guarantee.
- DOL is blocked from implementing the burdensome DOL enforcement scheme, outlined in the new H-2B program rule, related to audits and Certifying Officer assisted recruitment.

“Thanks to all in the United States Senate and House of Representatives who stuck to their principles and included key H-2B program improvements in the final 2016 spending bill. Our seasonal small and family businesses have one less thing to worry about as they prepare for spring,” said Craig Regelbrugge, Senior Vice President of AmericanHort.

“Our members’ businesses are now spared the devastating hit they would have faced this spring without the availability of H-2B workers. Thanks to Congress, during 2016, landscape professionals will now be able to hire needed seasonal H-2B workers, support their American workforce and provide their customers with the continued service that they rely on. The H-2B program has been plagued with uncertainty for the past several years, but the 2016 high-season is now saved. We are grateful Members of Congress have addressed the H2B program and in doing so, supported the economic viability for thousands of American businesses,” said Sabeena Hickman, CEO of National Association of Landscape Professionals.

“On account of the hardworking employees and workforce who operate lodging facilities and help boost the local economies in communities across the United States, especially during peak tourism seasons, the hotel industry applauds the Congressional leaders in both chambers who recognized the importance of including H-2B provisions in the omnibus bill,” said Brian Crawford, vice president of Government and Political Affairs at the American Hotel & Lodging Association and Co-Chair of the H-2B Workforce Coalition. “Incorporating these measures in the 2016 funding package will ensure the success of small businesses and provide American employers the tools they need to recruit workers for temporary employment in this country.”

“America’s fairs, carnivals, and circuses applaud all those in Congress who recognized the H-2B program as the small business issue that it actually is. I thank their leadership in protecting our businesses,” said President of Wood Entertainment Company, Inc. Michael Wood.

**To learn more about the H-2B Workforce Coalition, please visit our [website](#).**

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