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Landscaper May Lose Guest Workers Following Ruling

The last chance for Congress to expand a current foreign guest worker program was shot down today. As a result, many small businesses will be struggling to find enough workers to fill seasonal jobs. WFMZ's Joel D. Smith reports.

>> Alberto Ramirez: is here from Mexico on a temporary work visa. He lives in Mohnton with 9 other Mexican workers April through November making about 9 dollars an hour. Ramirez I think I pretty much make enough to spend the rest of the time, spend it with my family you know. >> Reporter He's here legally, as part of the government's H2B program.... and his employer couldn't be happier. Brian Cuccaro In the past we always found ourselves saying, hold off on bidding more jobs, because we can't get the work on the ground. now as much work comes in, we can handle it. >> Joel D. Smith: Brian says some people wrongfully assume these guys are taking away jobs from Americans. But under the program, they have to advertise locally, to Americans first. Last year, after advertising for 17 positions over three days, they only got one call back. Cuccaro For the most part, Americans don't want those positions. They want to be employed year round, and they just don't want seasonal positions. >> Reporter: But there is a cap on the number of workers allowed under the program, which means Brian is competing with everyone else for the same 66 thousand workers. >> Reporter: In years past, an exemption has been passed by Congress to allow thousands more, but not this year. Detractors say some workers are treated unfairly, and the government should concentrate instead on long term immigration plans. But in the short term, the lack of laborers might effect American workers too. Cuccaro It allows us to hire the American supervisors and foreman who are employed year round, and without these guys here, our supervisors from America, they don't have a position. >> Reporter: Ramirez takes this position on the topic. >> Ramirez: The more visas they give, the more people come in the right way. Because otherwise, they have no choice, they have to try to come in the wrong way. >> Reporter: Joel D. Smith, 69 News, Berks Edition.