NRCA

ROOFING DAY IN D.C.

2022

Immigration Reform that Meets Workforce Needs

Roofing industry employers provide family-sustaining jobs for qualified employees but face chronic workforce shortages because of an aging workforce and other demographic trends. In fact, workforce shortages are the biggest impediment to the ability of roofing industry employers to sustain and grow their businesses while providing families with the most basic necessity—roofs over their heads. Congress should enact immigration reform that helps grow the economy by meeting the workforce needs of the roofing industry.

The roofing industry supports increased border security, improving workplace enforcement of immigration laws, visa reform that allows workers to enter the U.S. legally when our economy needs them and addressing the status of undocumented individuals in a balanced manner. Sensible immigration reform should address the workforce needs of the roofing industry in a way that ends illegal immigration without encouraging a hidden economy, which results from the current policy. This hidden economy penalizes employers that follow the law and rewards those who do not. It is imperative immigration reform address this growing concern.

Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act

The roofing industry supports the establishment of a visa system that meets the workforce needs of employers in the 21st century. Any new visa system should be governed by market forces and provide more visas in times of economic strength and fewer during downturns. It should protect workers, be easy for employers to use, and enable job creators to obtain the workers needed to sustain and grow their businesses. Legislation to achieve these goals was introduced as the Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act (H.R. 4288), and the roofing industry continues to support this important reform.

The Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act would address chronic workforce shortages by establishing a two-track visa system that matches willing employers with willing temporary workers based on economic conditions. To obtain a permit to hire a visa holder, an employer must first attest the position cannot otherwise be filled. Unlike existing visa programs, the employee or the employer may terminate the relationship at any time, giving the employee portability among employers with permits to hire visa holders. Participating employers also must use E-Verify to enhance workplace enforcement efforts. This new, innovative visa system would help address workforce needs in a balanced manner.

Temporary Protected Status/Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals

The roofing industry also supports legislation to allow qualified individuals who have been working legally under Temporary Protected Status or the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals program to adjust to lawful permanent resident status and the potential opportunity to apply for citizenship. Many such individuals currently are working in the roofing industry and make invaluable contributions to their communities. Allowing these hard-working individuals to obtain lawful permanent status will allow them to continue supporting their communities and will strengthen our economy. The roofing industry urges Congress to prioritize solutions that protect our security, meet our workforce challenges, and provide a permanent solution for TPS and DACA individuals.

Request: Support the Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act and legislation to allow qualifying TPS and DACA individuals to obtain lawful permanent status and continue working in our communities.

Questions? Contact NRCA's Washington, D.C., office at (202) 546-7584 or (800) 338-5765.

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