

# Bringing certainty and security to U.S. farmers

## Background

U.S. farmers are struggling to find enough available workers. While the H-2A visa is intended to help farmers find workers from abroad, onerous regulations render the program unviable. As a result, H-2A workers only represent 10% of the total U.S. agricultural workforce, while unauthorized immigrants represent anywhere from 50%-75%.

## Policy Solutions

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act simplifies the agricultural visa system so that they're accessible to U.S. farmers who are unable to find enough local workers. The bill provides opportunities for some unauthorized workers to get right with the law. To reduce illegal immigration, the bill also increases opportunities for employers to legally hire guest workers and raises penalties on employers who hire illegally.

### Reduce onerous red tape.

The H-2A program contains dozens of hurdles that prevent employers from filling positions altogether. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act improves the visa system by making the H-2A wage requirement more reflective of the average wages that similarly employed Americans are paid. The bill also creates a year-round visa that allows industries to participate that are locked out of H-2A because the visa only exists for seasonal work.

### Improve incentives for employers and workers to comply with the law.

Rather than spending billions of taxpayer dollars removing workers without legal status, The Farm Workforce Modernization Act allows them to apply for work visas after being screened and paying fees. Those with a decade of work experience may apply for permanent legal status four years after the bill's enactment. The bill also reduces illegal immigration by requiring the use of E-Verify and raising employer penalties for noncompliance.

---

#### Contacts:

Josselin Castillo, Federal Affairs Liaison - [jcastillo@afphq.org](mailto:jcastillo@afphq.org)

Sam Peak, Policy Analyst- [speak@afphq.org](mailto:speak@afphq.org)