

American Dairy Coalition: Bipartisan H-2A amendment allows for use across all of agriculture

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The American Dairy Coalition applauds Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and the House Committee on Appropriations for approving the *Fiscal Year 2018 Homeland Security Appropriations Act* with a critical program that will allow for permanent dairy, livestock and agriculture workers to utilize the existing H-2A VisaProgram.

“Today, large segments of American agriculture face a critical lack of workers, a problem made worse by the fact that the H-2A program is not working for all of agriculture. H-2A must be made more workable for farmers, and my amendment clarifies that all of agriculture may use H-2A so it operates effectively as our nation’s Ag guest worker program” says Rep. Newhouse (R-WA).

As part of the *2018 Appropriations Act*, the amendment will extend a useful visa tool to large segments of the dairy, livestock and agriculture industries. Previously, the program offered no guarantee that sectors of the industry, particularly those facing year-round labor shortages, could use the H-2A program. This amendment clarifies that the program will be applicable to all sectors of agriculture, such as dairy operations and other types of agriculture that are not seasonal or temporary.

“Fundamental change occurred yesterday with the passing of Rep. Newhouse’s amendment,” noted Laurie Fischer, CEO of the American Dairy Coalition. “It shows both Republicans and Democrats understand the dairy industry demands a visa program to help alleviate the severe labor shortages across large segments of the industry. Our cows need to be cared for 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.”

The American Dairy Coalition (ADC) supports efforts of Rep. Newhouse and the House Committee on Appropriations in their work to pass this bipartisan amendment to support farmers across the nation. The ADC will continue to work with legislators in finding a workable solution to ensure producers can grow and thrive.

About the American Dairy Coalition: The American Dairy Coalition is the united voice of the dairy, agriculture and livestock industry. Successful policy making, in order to best serve this industry, starts in Washington DC. We focus only on top priority issues in order to remain nimble and quickly adapt to the ever changing federal policy making environment. ADC is the only national organization solely focused on advocating to advance the growth and success of progressive producers and agriculture companies.

In the past year, ADC has grown to represent over 30,000 dairy producers through memberships, as well as national and state dairy associations. ADC has collaborated with many groups and individuals to make a significant impact on the agriculture industry.