

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative: Applauds House approval of ag labor bill

Posted on Thursday, Dec 12, 2019

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, one of the largest dairy co-ops in the country, issued a statement today after the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Farm Workforce Modernization Act with a bipartisan vote — 34 Republicans joined 226 Democrats in favor.

The bill, H.R. 5038, would provide a path to legalization for current farm workers and expand the H-2A foreign guest worker program. The next step would be for the Senate to create a companion bill. Edge urged the Senate to continue with this process to address the needs of dairy farmers in the Midwest.

[Click here](#) for highlights of the bill. [Click here](#) for a full breakdown.

Statement from Brody Stapel, president of Edge and a dairy farmer in eastern Wisconsin:



“Edge applauds the bill’s authors, Reps. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., and Dan Newhouse, R-Wash., the co-sponsors and the many other representatives who came together in

broad bipartisan support of such important legislation.

“The bill comes at a time of major challenges for our dairy farmers as they struggle to find and keep skilled employees. Changes in demographics, labor patterns and the nature of the jobs have made it impossible for farmers to fill all available positions with American citizens.

“Unfortunately, the existing immigrant ag labor rules, which focus on seasonal work, are unworkable for year-round dairy farming. This bill would provide a way to safeguard our existing workforce and create a process for recruiting new employees.

“While certain items are not ideal, this compromise bill may be the best opportunity in the foreseeable future for a labor solution for our farmers. We urge the Senate to take up the bill, address potential improvements and move legislation forward.”

Photo: [Click here](#) for a photo of Brody Stapel

About Edge:

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative provides dairy farmers throughout the Midwest with a powerful voice — the voice of milk — in Congress, with customers and within their communities. Edge, based in Green Bay, Wis., is one of the top cooperatives in the country based on milk volume. More information: www.voiceofmilk.com.