



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

(617) 725-4000

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

December 11, 2007

The Honorable Harry M. Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and  
Minority Leader Boehner:

As you move towards conference negotiations for an omnibus  
appropriations bill, I urge you to retain language within the bill  
**extending provisions related to a visa program for non-skilled  
seasonal workers, known as H-2B, until September 30, 2008.**

As you know, the H-2B numerical limit set by Congress per  
fiscal year is 66,000. However, aliens who are eligible for H-2B status  
as "returning workers" do not count against the annual numerical cap.  
Congress worked to ensure that the "returning worker" provisions of  
the Save Our Small and Seasonal Businesses Act of 2005 (SOS Act)  
were extended until September 30, 2007. Therefore, Congress must  
act again to extend this vital program. The language included as part  
of the Senate passed C-J-S Appropriations bill would again extend  
the eligibility status for aliens with H-2B status as "returning workers"  
until September 30, 2008.

Honorable Harry M. Reid  
Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Honorable John Boehner  
December 11, 2007  
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In Massachusetts, the hospitality industry is the third largest employer with 125,200 in-state jobs directly tied to the success of tourism, which generates \$13.1 billion for the Massachusetts economy and \$833.3 million in state and local tax revenue. Unfortunately, this vital sector of our economy is facing a looming crisis long before the tourist season begins: it may not be able to secure enough employees if Congress does not address the shortage of H-2B visas for seasonal workers who enter the U.S. each year.

Without an extension of the returning worker exemption, many of the hotels and restaurants in Massachusetts are looking at an impending labor shortage that endangers the summer business they depend on. Without these temporary workers (many of whom are students from Europe or Latin America here during University holidays), many businesses could be forced to lay off permanent staff, limit services and hours, or ultimately close their doors for good.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

