



## Labor Shortages and the Need for Legal Immigration Reforms

### Requested Action

- Any improvements Congress can make to improve our border and legal immigration system can become the catalyst for additional reforms.
- Please cosponsor the bipartisan Essential Workers for Economic Advancement Act ([HR 3734](#)), which would create a nonseasonal program to help American companies supplement their U.S. workforce with temporary foreign workers.
- Please cosponsor the bipartisan Asylum Seekers Work Authorization Act ([HR 1325/S 255](#)), which would expedite the work authorization of certain applicants.

### Background

The cleaning industry is facing massive labor shortages and the demand for cleaning products and services remains high. As Congress looks to address immigration reform and border security, it is essential that any legislation recognize the current and future labor needs of the cleaning industry. Implementing a well-functioning essential worker program and expediting work authorizations for asylum seekers will strengthen border security, improve American productivity, increase economic activity, and create new career opportunities for American workers.

- The commercial cleaning market is made up of 1.2 million businesses and nearly 4 million workers nationwide<sup>1</sup>. Tens of thousands more workers are employed by manufacturers and distributors of cleaning products.
- The cleaning industry needs a predictable, reliable, and legal source of supplemental essential workers to continue to provide healthy workplaces, schools, hospitals, homes, hotels, restaurants, and other spaces.
- Nearly three in five (59%) are more aware of surface cleanliness when they're out in public, and over half (51%) say they'd be more likely to frequent a business if it provided evidence their facility has been properly disinfected<sup>2</sup>.

Currently, if businesses are unable to fill vacancies for jobs that are not seasonal in nature with U.S. workers, the companies have no legal options to hire temporary foreign workers. Consequently, positions remain vacant, public health suffers, and contracts are given up, all of which negatively impacts U.S. workers and the economy.



Legislation is needed to create a new visa classification that allows foreign nationals to perform year-round, non-farm work on a temporary basis. Employers and foreign nationals seeking job opportunities would apply for federal approval to hire these workers, only allowing workers to enter the U.S. when they have received government approval. These workers would only be allowed to work for an approved employer at the approved location for the specifically approved job at a fair wage that doesn't harm American workers. The number of visas available under such a program should be based on economic need, rather than an arbitrary cap or lottery. Employers need predictability and certainty in hiring essential workers.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-statistics/number-of-businesses/janitorial-services-united-states/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.issa.com/media/news/howie-mandel-joins-issa-to-rethink-what-clean-means>