

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 1, 2023

The Honorable Julie Su
Acting Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
S-2521
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20210

Brian Pasternak
Administrator
Office of Foreign Labor Certification
Employment and Training Administration
Department of Labor
N-5306
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Acting Secretary Su and Administrator Pasternak:

We are writing on behalf of farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural stakeholders in our states to request an extension of the comment period of your recently published proposed rulemaking *Improving Protections for Workers in Temporary Agricultural Employment in the United States*, 88 FR 63750 (September 15, 2023). The comment period is currently scheduled to close on November 14, 2023. Sixty days is an insufficient amount of time for all producers, who would be most affected, to develop thorough and meaningful feedback on this proposed rule. Additionally, four other regulatory actions of interest to these stakeholders have comment periods ending during the comment period of this regulation.¹

The United States takes pride in producing the world's safest, most abundant, and most affordable food supply. Our nation's ability to do so is entirely contingent on the strength of our agricultural workforce. The H-2A program provides a critical labor pool without which many producers in our states would struggle or be entirely unable to operate. Any proposed regulatory changes to the H-2A program have potential ramifications for the entire American agricultural supply chain and food security. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that our constituents be provided adequate time to thoroughly analyze this proposed rule and its effects on their operations. Moreover, this comment period is occurring while many producers in our states will be occupied with fall harvest and unable to dedicate time to developing meaningful comments.

¹ Worker Walkaround Representative Designation Process, 88 FR 59825 (August 30, 2023) (Comment period closes on October 30, 2023); comment period on heat injury and illness prevention in outdoor and indoor work settings on OSHA's Small Business Advocacy Review ("SBAR") Panel materials (Comment period closes on December 23, 2023); Modernizing H-2 Program Requirements, Oversight, and Worker Protections, 88 FR 65040 (September 20, 2023) (Comment period closes on November 20, 2023); Defining and Delimiting the Exemptions for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Outside Sales, and Computer Employees, 88 FR 62152 (September 8, 2023) (Comment period closes on November 7, 2023).

We respectfully request an additional 60 days for our constituents to develop and submit comments on this proposed regulation, given the timing of this comment period and those of the other four regulations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



CINDY HYDE-SMITH
United States Senator



SUSAN M. COLLINS
United States Senator



MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



JOHN THUNE
United States Senator



ROGER F. WICKER
United States Senator



JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senator



JAMES E. RISCH
United States Senator



JOHN BOOZMAN
United States Senator



JOHN HOEVEN
United States Senator



TIM SCOTT
United States Senator



ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator



TED CRUZ
United States Senator



DEB FISCHER
United States Senator



JAMES LANKFORD
United States Senator



THOM TILLIS
United States Senator



JOHN KENNEDY
United States Senator



MIKE BRAUN
United States Senator



CYNTHIA M. LUMMIS
United States Senator



TOMMY TUBERVILLE
United States Senator



KATIE BOYD BRITT
United States Senator



BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
United States Senator



M. MICHAEL ROUNDS
United States Senator



JONI K. ERNST
United States Senator



KEVIN CRAMER
United States Senator



RICK SCOTT
United States Senator



ROGER MARSHALL, M.D.
United States Senator



TED BUDD
United States Senator



PETE RICKETTS
United States Senator