



# LIUNA!

June 20, 2016

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RE: LIUNA URGES A NO VOTE ON THE CUELLAR-HARRIS AMENDMENT

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 500,000 members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), I write to express our union's opposition to the Cuellar-Harris amendment to include the H-2B returning worker exemption in the Fiscal Year 2017 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill. It is crucial that our Representatives stand up for workers against this brazen attempt to expand the H-2B seasonal work visa program.

The returning worker exemption would dramatically expand the issuance of H-2B visas well over the annual cap of 66,000. We have long stood against this; H-2B and the relentless abuse that comes with it inflicts suffering on all workers. It depresses wages and work safety standards, threatening the livelihood of working families. Little has been done to fix the program's many flaws, yet still we see endless pleas to Congress from companies seeking to bring more and more guest workers into this country, guest workers who are placed at the mercy of the many parties which take advantage of them, from recruiters to employers; guest workers who are subjected to appalling, slave-like conditions.

There are many Americans willing and able to do the jobs for fair pay and treatment, a fact that some companies flippantly dismiss as an inconvenience in their bid to hire more foreign workers they can pay significantly less. The system as it stands allows this; it incentivizes H-2B abuse by unscrupulous companies looking for exploitable labor.

You have a responsibility to protect working families in your districts and across the country. We cannot afford to sit idly by while some Representatives are lured into playing politics for the benefit of those who want to bypass ready and willing US workers in order to get away with paying an exploitable immigrant worker significantly less. Exempting returning workers is a de facto expansion of the H-2B program; it is something far too important to simply be weaseled into the appropriations bill through a quick amendment.

Working families here in the US and immigrant families coming in through visas deserve better. We urge you to stand up for workers everywhere by voting against the Cuellar-Harris amendment.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

TERRY O'SULLIVAN  
General President

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*Feel the Power*