

Dear friends,

The Obama administration made it official today, issuing long expected new rules to guide operation of the H2A visa program for temporary farm workers.

The new rules are bad news for U.S. agriculture and bad news for comprehensive immigration reform.

Instead of making it easier for needed foreign workers to come to the U.S. legally and contribute to the U.S. economy – the primary goal of immigration reform - the new H2A regulations will make it *harder* for American farmers to hire the workers they need to keep their operations running and provide food for Americans. This will be ruinous for agricultural employers – and also for many American workers employed in the farm sector and in an array of related fields.

But the damage doesn't stop there. The new regulations also set a horrible example for lawmakers drafting comprehensive reform – lawmakers who will surely look to existing programs for guidance on how to structure a new, non-farm worker visa program. A worker visa program too cumbersome and bureaucratic to use will do nothing to fix the broken immigration system and nothing to replace the current unlawful influx with a legal flow. Yet that is exactly what the Obama administration is modeling – a worker visa program too cumbersome and bureaucratic to use.

President Obama speaks often and eloquently about his commitment to immigration reform. The new H2A regulations are a blot on that commitment.

Here are links to the new rule and to some other reactions from the pro-immigration business community.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR [regulation](#)

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR [summary](#)

LOS ANGELES TIMES [article](#)

WALL STREET JOURNAL [article](#)

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU [statement](#)

AMERICAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION [statement](#)

WESTERN GROWERS ASSOCIATION [statement](#)

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