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Meat and Poultry Industry Applauds Introduction of Agricultural Worker Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 2, 2017 - House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) today introduced the Agricultural Guestworker Act of 2017, creating an H-2C visa program that will allow American farmers, ranchers, producers, packers and processors access to a legal and stable supply of workers. The National Turkey Federation (NTF), National Chicken Council (NCC) and North American Meat Institute (NAMI) commend the Chairman for his leadership and introduction of this legislation and are encouraged by this important step to help ensure a reliable workforce for the meat and poultry industry.

“With today’s workforce shortages, access to a pool of legal immigrant workers through a viable visa program is critical to the turkey industry and the long-term success of the U.S. economy. We look forward to working with the Chairman and Congress to pass the legislation,” said Joel Brandenberger, President of the National Turkey Federation.

“The introduction of this legislation is an important first step for a comprehensive approach to immigration reform,” said NCC President Mike Brown. “An effective occupational visa system may be the most important barrier to illegal immigration. The creation of the H-2C program would serve the diverse interests of the agriculture and food manufacturing industries and will boost the modern agriculture labor market. NCC commends Chairman Goodlatte, and we look forward to working with him and Congress on a comprehensive approach to immigration reform.”

“The meat and poultry industry depends on a stable, reliable workforce to produce the high quality, nutritious products that consumers love. However, workforce needs are a consistent and pressing priority for the industry, as many jobs remain unfilled. The Meat Institute thanks Chairman Goodlatte for helping to address these challenges by introducing the ‘Agricultural Guestworker Act,’ which, if passed, will offer our members an additional avenue for securing valuable employees when local workers are simply unavailable,” said Barry Carpenter, North American Meat Institute President and CEO.

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