

July 14, 2026

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cassidy and Ranking Member Sanders:

On behalf of a broad group of agricultural stakeholders across the food and fiber supply chain, we write in strong support of the nomination of Keith E. Sonderling to serve as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Collectively, our organizations represent the agricultural employers, producers, labor providers, and rural businesses that rely on a stable, legal, workable federal labor and immigration framework to keep American farms, ranches, growers, and related operations running.

Mr. Sonderling's prior service as Acting and Deputy Administrator of the Department's Wage and Hour Division gave him direct experience with H-2A enforcement, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and the compliance burdens agricultural employers face.

As Deputy Secretary and now Acting Secretary, Mr. Sonderling has prioritized regulatory relief for agricultural employers, including by helping reverse prior regulatory actions that threatened American agriculture. Most importantly, he ensured quick action by the Department to release the interim final rule, *Adverse Effect Wage Rate Methodology for the Temporary Employment of H-2A Nonimmigrants in Non-Range Occupations in the United States*, 90 Fed. Reg. 47,914 (Oct. 2, 2025), and has overseen a proposed joint employer rule to provide agricultural employers, labor contractors, and farm labor associations with a single, predictable nationwide standard.

Agriculture cannot function without a reliable, sufficiently staffed workforce, and the H-2A program remains the primary lawful channel for meeting that need. Agricultural stakeholders need a Secretary of Labor who understands the operational realities of farm labor and what policies can help ensure American agriculture will thrive into the future.

Mr. Sonderling's record reflects that understanding and it is why we respectfully urge the Committee to favorably report Mr. Sonderling's nomination and the full Senate to confirm him without delay.

Sincerely,

National Council of Agricultural Employers

Agriculture Retailers Association

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Mushroom Institute

American Soybean Association

AmericanHort

AWMA

Central Valley Ag Cooperative

Colorado Fruit & Vegetable Growers
Association

Controlled Environment Agriculture
Alliance

Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association

Florida Growers' Association

Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers
Association

Georgia Green Industry Association, Inc.

Grower-Shipper Association of Central
California

International Fresh Produce Association

Michigan Agricultural Cooperative
Marketing Association

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation

National Association of State Departments
of Agriculture

National Cotton Council

National Cotton Ginners Association

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Grain and Feed Association

National Milk Producers Federation

National Onion Association

National Pork Producers Council

National Potato Council

National Watermelon Association

New England Apple Council

New York State Horticultural Society

New York State Vegetable Growers
Association

North American Blueberry Council

Northeast Dairy Producers Association

Northwest Horticultural Council

Snake River Farmers' Association

Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association

Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association,
Inc.

Specialty Crop Farm Labor Contractors

Texas Citrus Mutual

Texas Cotton Ginners' Association

Texas International Produce Association

Texas Vegetable Association

U.S. Apple Association

US Custom Harvesters, Inc.

Virginia Agricultural Growers Association,
Inc.

Washington State Tree Fruit Association

Western Growers

Worker and Farmer Labor Association