

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 77

BY REPRESENTATIVES BUTLER, AMEDEE, BAGLEY, BOUDREAUX, BOYD, BRAUD, BROUSSARD, CHASSION, COATES, DEWITT, DICKERSON, ECHOLS, EGAN, FISHER, HEBERT, HORTON, TRAVIS JOHNSON, MILLER, SAWYER, SCHAMERHORN, WALTERS, WYBLE, AND ZERINGUE AND SENATORS ALLAIN, BASS, CATHEY, EDMONDS, FESI, HENRY, JACKSON-ANDREWS, MILLER, TALBOT, WHEAT, AND WOMACK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the United States Congress, the President of the United States, the United States Department of Labor, the United States Department of Homeland Security, and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to take all necessary and appropriate actions to pass the H-2B Certified Seasonal Employer Designation and reclassify all job duties of the crawfish industry as agricultural labor services for purposes of the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program.

WHEREAS, the H-2B visa program is a seasonal, guest-worker program that allows our state's seasonal employers, primarily crawfish processors and landscapers, to bring in guest-workers on a temporary basis to supplement their operations and support their American workers during their peak seasons; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2025, approximately eight thousand one hundred sixty-three H-2B positions were certified in Louisiana, of which over three thousand one hundred thirty-eight were in crawfish and seafood processing occupations and over two thousand were in landscaping; and

WHEREAS, studies show that each H-2B worker supports between 3.2 and 4.6 jobs for American workers, and the H-2B visa program supports over twenty-five thousand jobs in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, studies show the crawfish industry contributes over three hundred million dollars to the Louisiana economy annually while the green industry contributes over two billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, a recent survey by Unleash Prosperity shows that, due to the insufficient number of visas and the processing delays, close to half of seasonal H-2B employers do not expect to be profitable in 2026, including most of our state's crawfish processors and landscapers, making this an urgent threat to the Louisiana economy; and

WHEREAS, crawfish production and landscaping in Louisiana is highly seasonal and labor intensive, requiring a reliable and timely workforce during peak harvest and processing periods; and

WHEREAS, handling, weighing, washing, grading, processing, peeling, packaging, and freezing of crawfish for sale are fundamentally tied to aquacultural production, forming a continuous chain of timely executed operations essential for moving the product from farm to market; and

WHEREAS, due to the temporary and seasonal nature of the crawfish harvest and of the landscaping industry, job postings are often left vacant due to a shortage of readily available, able, willing, and qualified domestic workers; and

WHEREAS, both the H-2A program and the Certified Seasonal Employer Designation could account for this domestic labor shortage while not displacing or adversely affecting domestic workers or wages; and

WHEREAS, to employ workers under the H-2A program, an employer is required to provide domestic workers, including H-2A workers, with adequate housing, transportation, and meals, and pay wages in accordance with the current Adverse Effect Wage Rate, as determined by the United State Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, the Certified Seasonal Employer Designation requires employers to have participated in the H-2B program for the last five years and have no history of labor violations; and

WHEREAS, the Certified Seasonal Employer Designation rewards employers who have a long-standing record of following the United States immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's crawfish and landscaping employers are facing increasing competition from employers entering the H-2B program after previously hiring illegal aliens,

with demand for the H-2B program having increased by seventy percent over the past five years and by eight percent year-over-year; and

WHEREAS, despite the seasonality and agricultural nature of Louisiana's crawfish industry, current federal regulations classify job duties involving crawfish processing and related work as nonagricultural, restricting employers to the oversubscribed and highly competitive H-2B Temporary Non-agricultural Workers Program; and

WHEREAS, the H-2B program's limited visa cap, unpredictable supplemental visa allotments, and lengthy processing delays have caused severe workforce shortages in Louisiana's crawfish and landscaping industries, resulting in limited processing capacity, financial losses, and significant disruptions across the supply chain, largely due to administrative rulemaking regarding visa certifications, job duty classifications, and supplemental visa distributions; and

WHEREAS, the H-2A program is specifically designed to meet seasonal agricultural labor needs; and

WHEREAS, classifying all job duties performed by a crawfish worker, including but not limited to fishing, baiting, handling, weighing, washing, grading, tagging, cleaning, processing, peeling, packaging, freezing, and preparation of crawfish for sale as agricultural labor would bring federal policy into alignment with the operational reality of crawfish farming and would stabilize the workforce that Louisiana's crawfish industry depends on; and

WHEREAS, ensuring an adequate, legal, and dependable labor supply is vital to the survival of Louisiana's crawfish farmers, processors, landscapers, and associated rural economies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress, the President of the United States, the United States Department of Labor, the United States Department of Homeland Security, and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to take all necessary and appropriate actions to pass the H-2B Certified Seasonal Employer Designation and reclassify all job duties of the crawfish industry as agricultural labor services for purposes of the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that reclassification should include revisions to federal statutes, regulations, or administrative interpretations, as needed, to ensure that Louisiana crawfish producers and processors will be able to utilize the H-2A program to meet their essential seasonal workforce needs immediately and that long-standing, compliant users of the H-2B program be designated as certified seasonal employers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Labor, the United States Center for Immigration Services and the Department of State should take immediate action to improve H-2B processing times, including reinstating interview waivers for returning H-2B workers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the action to reclassify the job duties of the crawfish industry as agricultural labor services be taken expeditiously, with emergency measures implemented to ensure the timely processing of the H-2A visas and to meet the labor demands of the 2026 crawfish season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the secretary of the United States Department of Labor, the secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security, the majority and minority leaders of the United States Senate, the speaker and minority leader of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE