

MIKE SIMPSON

SECOND DISTRICT, IDAHO

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

2084 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-5531
FAX: (202) 225-8216

DISTRICT OFFICE:

802 WEST BANNOCK STREET, SUITE 600
BOISE, ID 83702
(208) 334-1953
FAX: (208) 334-9533
simpson.house.gov



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT,
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INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT,
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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 19, 2019

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Chairman

The Honorable Doug Collins, Ranking Member

Committee on the Judiciary

United States House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins:

I want to start by thanking you for the opportunity to testify about one of the most pressing issues facing my constituents in Idaho's Second Congressional District.

Whether I am in the Magic Valley talking to Idaho dairy farmers or the potato fields outside my home in Idaho Falls, the number one issue I hear about from agriculture is clear: they desperately need immigration reform to stabilize their workforce. The issues are complex and unique to each industry. Potato farmers and other row crops face uncontrollable and unpredictable wage growth in addition to the burdensome and bureaucratic process of accessing H-2A workers under the current system. Dairy farmers don't even have access to a program that fits the needs of their year-round jobs.

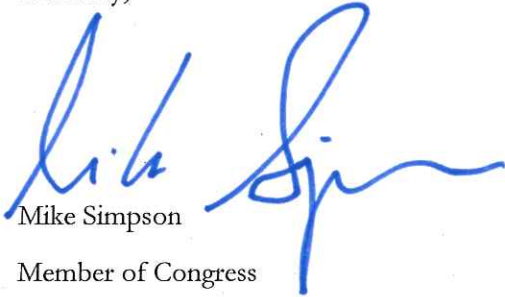
For these reasons and many others, I support the House Judiciary Committee pursuing immigration reform that would resolve the labor force needs of agriculture that allows for a legal process to address the current and future workforce. While I have long been a supporter of comprehensive immigration reform, I believe the current labor crisis in agriculture merits the need to advance a bipartisan bill specifically addressing agriculture workforce immigration reform.

This also is just not about agriculture farmers. It is also about the workers who want the opportunity to work and provide for their families. In some instances, this is the only home they know, in others they want to travel to and from their home countries. A solution needs to address different needs and desires not just for farmers, but for workers too. I also believe this is an animal welfare issue. The thought of dairies not having enough labor to adequately care for cows is a sad thought and I don't think any person wants to see our farms in that dire of a situation.

There is no question that border security, providing certainty the DACA population, and addressing the estimated 11 million plus undocumented migrants should be priorities. However, Idaho's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture and the labor shortage is one of the top issues I hear about in my district no

matter where I go. That is why I look forward to continuing this dialogue as you move forward on crafting immigration reforms this Congress. Once again, I appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on these critical programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Simpson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Simpson".

Mike Simpson

Member of Congress