

Attorney General Raoul Files Federal Comments In Support Of Agricultural Workers

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CHCAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul, along with 10 attorneys general, today filed comments in support of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) regarding changes to the H-2A program. The H-2A program allows agricultural employers who anticipate a shortage of domestic workers to

bring nonimmigrant foreign workers to the U.S. to perform temporary agricultural work. The proposed regulations would strengthen worker protection measures for H-2A agricultural workers and the DOL's capability to monitor compliance and take enforcement actions.

“Individuals who come to the U.S. to fill critical workforce shortages deserve to be protected from abuse and unsafe workplaces,” Raoul said. “The Department of Labor’s proposed rule strengthens its H-2A program to enhance the department’s ability to protect vulnerable workers as they play important roles enhancing our nation’s economy.”

The H-2A program, and agricultural work more generally, experiences high rates of workplace violations and worker exploitation. The proposed rule is intended to address concerns regarding the DOL’s ability to enforce regulations related to foreign labor recruitment, to improve accountability for employers who use various methods to attempt to evade the law and regulatory requirements, and to enhance worker protections for a marginalized workforce.

[The comment letter](#) Raoul and the coalition filed highlights three specific areas that promote access to information and accountability:

- Broader protections for workers’ efforts to form and join labor organizations.
- Protection from arbitrary or retaliatory termination.
- Transparency regarding foreign recruiters.

Attorney General Raoul was joined in filing the comments by the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Washington.