

January 18, 2018

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn:

I am your constituent and a member of the Texas Association of Fairs & Events. Our organization has been in existence since 1926 and we represent fairs, festivals and events from across the State of Texas as well as associate members who provide goods and/or services to our industry. These fairs, festivals and/or events host rodeos, 4-H and FFA events and traveling carnivals that supply mobile amusement rides and midways. Our member fairs, festivals and events depend on the revenues that they receive from the carnivals to supplement the rising economic costs that allow them to continually operate year after year.

Each year our members contract with numerous carnivals. It has become more difficult to find quality mobile entertainment to supply fairs, festivals and events with a clean, wholesome and safe environment. Many of our associate members who are carnival/amusement providers have become dependent on the safe, legal and security-screened foreign labor.

The H-2B program that many of our carnivals utilizes is essential for their business. Carnivals cannot fill all the seasonal jobs with American workers despite intensive recruitment efforts. Their seasonal industry has had to augment its domestic workforce with H-2B foreign labor because they cannot fully staff their mobile enterprises due to the 10 month season of travel and the need to work evenings, weekends and most holidays. Many of the multi-generational carnivals in Texas operate complicated machines that patrons enjoy riding year after year when they visit the local, county or State Fairs. Constant turnover of their workforce increase both liabilities and efficiency to provide the public with a fun but most importantly a **safe** environment.

Many of our carnival contractors based in Texas are experiencing difficulty in securing labor to fulfill their obligations due to the cap of H2B Visas. This lack of workforce will cause serious business disruptions, safety liabilities and economic hardships for our fair, festival and civic members in Texas and across the United States.

To aid this important group of carnival/amusement providers we request that you include immediate and short term H2B cap relief in any appropriate 2018 appropriations bill. With this relief our fairs, festivals and events can continue providing a safe and enjoyable experience for the citizens of the State of Texas.

Sincerely,

Texas Association of Fairs & Events