



**> MAKE IMMIGRATION
WORK FOR AMERICA**



The administration is working hard to deliver on President Trump's promise to make the United States the best place in the world to manufacture things.

His landmark tax bill delivered a permanent, pro-growth tax code, positioning manufacturers to build, grow and hire even more. His efforts to rebalance and modernize regulations will roll back the regulatory onslaught that has burdened manufacturers in the U.S. with \$350 billion in compliance costs every year—capital much better spent on our factories, innovations and employees. His work to strengthen our nation's energy dominance and artificial intelligence leadership will make sure America, and not other nations, shapes the innovations that define the future—and the strength of our shop floors.

For manufacturers in the United States to fulfill the full promise of the president's manufacturing agenda—his victories across tax, regulations, energy, AI and more—we need the strongest manufacturing workforce in the world. But right now, manufacturers have more work to do than people able to do it. More than 400,000 manufacturing jobs on our shop floors are unfilled, even as manufacturers leverage the productivity gains of automation. According to the Manufacturing Institute—the 501(c)3 workforce development and education affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers—and Deloitte, that number is projected to reach 1.9 million by 2033 if manufacturers are not able to address the skills and applicant gap.¹ The challenge behind these numbers is structural: there

will be a systemic shortfall in the amount of skilled people and applicants ready to turn President Trump's pro-manufacturing vision into lasting prosperity for the American people.

Employers in the industry are investing heavily to attract, train and upskill homegrown talent—through partnering with educational institutions, incumbent worker upskilling or apprenticeships—and that investment is growing over time.² In 2024, registered apprentices serving in the manufacturing industry grew to 96,500, a 27% increase over the past five years, which doesn't even account for the thousands of nonregistered apprenticeships.³ For example, just 15% of the MI's Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) participants are registered apprentices, evidence of the immense scale of employer-led apprenticeships in the industry.

Manufacturers will partner with policymakers to expand these efforts and develop the skilled domestic workforce we need. And at the same time, manufacturers will drive even more prosperity for the United States if we can **close gaps in the domestic labor supply—by fixing an immigration system that is outdated** and that was not designed to satisfy our industry's and our economy's vital workforce needs. That's why we need President Trump to clean up

the mess left behind by previous administrations and take new, bold action on immigration that strengthens our economy. Our message: The time for action is now!

In January 2026, President Trump said about comprehensive immigration policy, “It’s about time for the country”. Manufacturers appreciate the administration’s focus on immigration reform. Moving past the shortcomings of past administrations and achieving strong border security and targeted enforcement are essential to a lawful, stable system that ensures hiring occurs through legal channels. And manufacturers agree with President Trump that this moment requires leadership to get broad immigration reform moving and across the finish line—reform that addresses the root cause of illegal immigration. By **pairing border security and targeted enforcement with a modern, merit-based, employment-driven immigration framework**, the president can create a legal immigration system that works and secure his vision of American manufacturing dominance for generations to come.

Manufacturers face a unique, structural workforce challenge unlike that of any other industry, but the current system fails to recognize the distinct skills and positions that drive production on the shop floor. **Welders, machinists and technicians** are essential to making things in America. They are the backbone of our industrial strength, but the system offers few pathways to bring them here legally. And while programs exist for **scientists and engineers**—who are also critical to manufacturing growth—those pathways must be updated and reformed to meet the evolving demands of innovation, technology and advances of manufacturing in the decades ahead. To power growth and realize American manufacturing dominance until the domestic workforce can meet

the industry’s needs, **we need a legal, merit-based, employment-driven immigration system that works.**

There is a powerful multiplier effect from legal immigration. When manufacturers in the U.S. offer opportunities to high-skilled immigrants, a greater number of innovative manufacturing projects get off the ground, which in turn employ dozens, hundreds or even thousands of American workers; high-skilled immigrants also often launch new businesses, develop product lines and drive technological advances that generate additional jobs for the domestic workforce—jobs and opportunities that would otherwise be created in other countries.

At the same time, **workers with manufacturing-essential talents on factory floors across the country** keep production lines moving, making goods that sustain consumer demand and spending. And with every paycheck, these workers invest back into their communities, supporting local businesses, schools and housing and creating a cycle of growth. That’s why manufacturers are committed to immigration reforms that ensure our industry has access to the wide range of talent needed to power the industry into the future—for the benefit of all Americans.



Jay Timmons
President and CEO

➤ Help Wanted: Manufacturers Are Hiring

President Trump Is a Manufacturing Champion

Manufacturers have stood strong with President Trump, together achieving landmark policy wins for our industry:

- The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was rocket fuel for manufacturers, and the president's 2025 tax bill made permanent a **pro-growth, pro-manufacturing tax code** that will drive increased investment across the industry.
- The president's relentless drive to **rebalance federal regulations** is putting an end to a regulatory onslaught that costs manufacturers \$350 billion a year, freeing up capital for job creation and manufacturing growth.
- The White House **AI Action Plan** recognizes that AI is central to modern manufacturing and sets up the United States to remain the dominant global power in AI innovation and adoption.
- The president's **energy dominance and permitting reform** agenda is unleashing American energy and allowing manufacturers to expand and power their operations in the U.S.

These achievements demonstrate President Trump's rock-solid commitment to being a manufacturing champion. In fact, he has made manufacturing growth a central goal of his economic policy. In short, the president understands that when manufacturing wins, America wins. The administration's continued commitment is essential to addressing manufacturers' remaining challenges and ensuring that our shared vision of American manufacturing dominance becomes a reality.





Manufacturers Are Putting American Workers First

Manufacturers need a 21st-century manufacturing workforce to turn this vision into reality—but face a persistent structural challenge: finding the right workers with the right skills. That’s why manufacturers are doing everything they can to attract, train and upskill our homegrown workforce. These investments include the following:

- Manufacturers partner with career and technical education institutions to develop rigorous technical training programs that allow their graduates to transition into high-wage, high-demand jobs as welders, machinists and electricians. The premier national model for such manufacturing skills training is FAME (Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education), a program of the MI⁴ that develops highly skilled, professional and sought-after talent to meet the unique needs and challenges of modern manufacturing—today and tomorrow.
- The manufacturing industry has also developed programs and partnerships to build connections with the military community. For example, the MI’s Heroes MAKE America initiative connects transitioning servicemembers, veterans, National Guard members, reservists and military spouses with manufacturers and opportunities in the manufacturing sector. There are nearly 200,000 men and women who transition out of the military every year, and their military training and experience with advanced technology make them ideal candidates for manufacturing careers.
- Manufacturers also recognize that closing the workforce gap requires fully leveraging the skills and ambition of women and allies across the sector. The MI’s STEP Ahead program strengthens the modern manufacturing workforce by supporting and empowering the workers leading the industry at every level—from the shop floor to the C-suite. By ensuring employees have the resources, recognition and opportunities needed to thrive in their careers, STEP Ahead not only supports today’s leaders but also inspires and equips the next generation to pursue manufacturing careers essential to U.S. competitiveness.
- The manufacturing industry also strives to engage students to attract the next generation of Americans to the manufacturing workforce. The MI has developed a set of engagement tools and resources that manufacturers use to connect with their local schools and communities to promote manufacturing careers, and the NAM–MI “Creators Wanted” campaign has driven interest in and excitement about manufacturing in schools across the country.

“ **Manufacturers face a persistent structural challenge: finding the right workers with the right skills. That’s why they are doing everything they can to attract, train and upskill our homegrown workforce.**”

– Carolyn Lee, President and Executive Director, the Manufacturing Institute

In addition to these efforts, manufacturers offer competitive pay and benefits: manufacturing employees earned on average \$106,691, including pay and benefits, in 2024, which is more than 17% higher than the private nonfarm industry average. This homegrown manufacturing workforce puts shovels in the ground and factories in the heartland of America, supporting thriving communities across our nation. Manufacturers are committed to working with the government to build and equip the next generation of American workers.

But these long-standing efforts to develop a homegrown workforce only fix part of the problem. There are more than 400,000 jobs open in the sector. Furthermore, the median age of a manufacturing worker is higher than for other industries, making the pace of retirements an added challenge in the coming years. By 2033, manufacturers are projected to need to fill 3.8 million jobs, 1.9 million of which could go unfilled if manufacturers are not able to address the skills and applicant gap.⁵ Until both public- and private-sector efforts to attract and train homegrown talent can meet industry demand fully, **the U.S. needs additional workers now to fill the jobs that continue to go unfilled by the domestic workforce.** Manufacturers need two primary types of workers:



- Essential shop floor workers, including manufacturing-skilled talent such as technicians, machinists, welders and electricians, as well as core production workers, bolster capacity, support the modern, connected manufacturing shop floor and allow manufacturers to add shifts and keep production lines running.
- Manufacturers also need high-skilled, degreed workers, including scientists and researchers, to drive our industry’s world-leading innovation and R&D, engineers to design cutting-edge factories and next-generation products and data and computer scientists to drive the AI-powered transformation of manufacturing.

“ **Manufacturers need essential factory-floor workers—such as technicians, mechanics and line workers—to keep production lines running, and high-skilled, degreed workers, including scientists, researchers and engineers, to keep U.S. manufacturing at the cutting edge.**”

– Carolyn Lee, President and Executive Director, the Manufacturing Institute

A Legal Immigration System to Strengthen U.S. Manufacturing

The United States has a gap in workforce needs, and while manufacturers work to attract and train domestic talent, employers want to help build an immigration system that helps fill those gaps. Unfortunately, after decades of mismanagement by successive administrations, the current immigration system suffers from a fundamental flaw: **it was not primarily designed to satisfy the economic and workforce needs of the United States.** Policymakers must refocus and retool our nation's immigration system to contribute to the workforce that entrepreneurs and manufacturers actually need to grow the American economy—rules of the road that provide certainty, predictability and workforce stability and a merit-based, employment-driven system that recognizes and maximizes the potential for economic contribution of each immigrant.

Manufacturers believe that **the best, most durable solution to illegal immigration is a legal immigration system that works.** Manufacturers believe our leaders not only have an obligation to fix America's broken immigration system but face a unique opportunity to improve it, both via comprehensive immigration reform and targeted improvements to immigration laws and regulations, as they work to strengthen the U.S. economy and workforce and prepare for the challenges ahead.

“ It is time to begin moving towards a merit-based immigration system—one that admits people who are skilled, who want to work, who will contribute to our society and who will love and respect our country.”

— President Donald Trump

➤ Securing Borders, Strengthening the Workforce

Manufacturers appreciate and support President Trump's commitment to addressing illegal immigration and reducing unlawful border crossings. This is the foundation on which we can reform legal immigration, with a singular focus on sustaining America's economic leadership and manufacturers' competitiveness. **Manufacturers need to know that the workforce they hire is in the country legally so that they can invest in their workers and make long-term investment decisions confidently.** In fact, uncertainty around the legality and availability of workers continues to be a roadblock to achieving the manufacturing growth championed by President Trump. That is why manufacturers stand behind the rule of law and the security of our nation's borders.



Manufacturers need the tools and resources to ensure they hire only those in the country legally: the industry will be stronger with an immigration system that is functional and that companies can rely on. That starts with **mandating use of an enhanced E-Verify system** that provides added identity authentication options to reduce employers' vulnerability to identity fraud and provides a safe harbor against liability if used in good faith.

More broadly, every aspect of the immigration system must be designed around **strong visa program integrity measures** that ensure these programs function as intended, without abuse, fraud or misuse. These safeguards will help guarantee that every person is in the country legally, that every worker is who they claim to be, that extensive criminal background checks are performed and that every tax that is owed is paid—which will ensure that these workers contribute to the government programs on which Americans depend. Protecting the integrity of these programs means that manufacturers can utilize them safely and reliably to expand manufacturing capacity and drive economic growth.

Manufacturers support the administration's commitment to immigration enforcement that upholds the rule of law. As enforcement efforts advance, consideration should be given to **avoiding sudden workforce disruptions for employers operating within the current legal requirements** and **prioritizing protecting public safety and national security**. This includes limiting the impact of changes to work authorization programs, focusing enforcement and deportation operations on individuals who represent a genuine public safety or national security risk and collaborating in advance on worksite enforcement with employers that use E-Verify. A balanced and predictable approach strengthens both national security and America's manufacturing.

Secure borders and effective enforcement are foundational to a working immigration system—and they lay the groundwork for economic reforms that will help ensure manufacturers have the workforce they need to invest confidently in America.



➤ Immigration Reform That Works for America

Manufacturers are calling for two essential categories of immigration reforms that would modernize the system, support economic growth and ensure a stable workforce.

Global High-Skilled Talent to Power America's Manufacturing Growth

- Enhance the F-1 Visa Program for Students
- Improve Pathways for Global High-Skilled Talent (H-1B)
- Modernize the Lawful Permanent Resident Program (Green Cards)
- Create a Dedicated Manufacturing Visa Office

A Pathway to Meet America's Essential Manufacturing Labor Needs

- Create a Year-Round Guest Worker Program for Foreign-Born Essential Workers
- Strengthen and Expand Seasonal Worker Programs
- Provide Certainty and Stability for Employers of Workers Brought to the U.S. as Children

1. Global High-Skilled Talent to Power America's Manufacturing Growth

Manufacturers in the U.S. are investing heavily in the development of our homegrown workforce, yet these efforts cannot currently meet the industry's needs. That is why manufacturers support legal immigration reforms to drive a merit-based, employment-driven system that prioritizes the country's economic needs.



Modern manufacturing runs on innovation and is vitally dependent on a steady pipeline of high-skilled talent, both foreign and domestic, in particular in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM):

- While manufacturing represents just under 10% of U.S. GDP, it accounts for almost 53% of all private-sector research and development. This means that manufacturing is significantly more innovation-dependent than any other sector of the U.S. economy.⁶
- Factories cannot be designed, built or operated without engineers and scientists. Without this skilled talent, manufacturers in the U.S. cannot maintain the scale, competitiveness or leadership needed in the global economy. This means that, in turn, these scientists and engineers create more U.S. manufacturing jobs throughout the industry.
- AI is reshaping manufacturing, from digitalization of the shop floor to optimization of the supply chain. To harness these tools, manufacturers need data and computer scientists skilled in these systems. Without a steady pipeline of AI-savvy talent, the U.S. risks falling behind in both productivity and innovation.



Despite significant investments in education, training and upskilling programs, the domestic supply of high-skilled professionals remains far below demand. High-skilled immigrants work hand in hand with high-skilled domestic workers and allow manufacturers to remain competitive in the global economy, fill skills gaps and bolster economic growth—and their work gets projects off the ground that, in turn, employ hundreds or thousands of additional American workers. By aligning immigration policy with the nation’s economic and technological priorities, the administration and Congress can help manufacturers secure the high-skilled talent necessary to accelerate innovation and sustain the manufacturing dominance championed by President Trump.

To “make unbelievably complex chips and computers and other things,” manufacturers will “have to bring some people in” –and “we want them to bring in experts” to support U.S. investment.

– President Donald Trump

Enhance the F-1 Visa Program for Students

The F-1 program is the primary visa category allowing foreign students to pursue academic studies in the United States. Its Curricular Practical Training, Optional Practical Training and STEM OPT options allow these students to gain practical training and professional experience related to their field of study during or after their studies. After OPT/STEM OPT, these students can transition into longer-term positions (11% of new H1-B hires made by manufacturers in 2024 transitioned from F-1 status).⁷ This means the F-1 visa is an important source of high-skilled talent for the manufacturing industry in the U.S.

That is why manufacturers want to preserve the industry’s ability to efficiently hire foreign students graduating from American universities, rather than letting them take their talents to our foreign competitors. This means avoiding shortening the length of the F-1 visa, imposing unnecessary compliance burdens or preventing changes of schools or majors, all of which would render the U.S. higher education system rigid, risky and unwelcoming for international students, materially weaken its attractiveness relative to its international competitors and thus weaken manufacturers’ access to the students whose innovations will shape the future of manufacturing, technology and economic growth. **Preserving or even enhancing the F-1 visa program will keep talented foreign students here in America—driving the U.S. economy—rather than letting other countries take advantage of their talent at the expense of the United States.**



Improve Pathways for Global High-Skilled Talent (H-1B)

The H-1B program is the primary visa category used by U.S. employers to hire foreign workers in specialty occupations (i.e., requiring the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree, or higher, in a highly specialized field). By statute, there is an annual cap of 65,000 H-1Bs, plus an additional 20,000 for individuals with a U.S. master’s or Ph.D. degree. H-1Bs are critical to the manufacturing industry because of manufacturers’ dependence on excellence in STEM.

To help manufacturers access high-skilled, specialty talent that drives innovation and advancement throughout the industry—and to beat out other countries in this competition—manufacturers recommend the following:

- **Increase the number of available H-1B visas.** In FY 2025, employers submitted 406,348 H-1B applications⁸—far exceeding the 85,000 annual cap. Manufacturers alone accounted for 47,282 H-1B applications, illustrating our industry’s acute need for greater access to this pool of talent.
- **Provide work authorization for spouses of H-1B workers.** The U.S. is competing with other countries to attract the best workers, and high-skilled workers and their families are more likely to decide to work in countries that provide this opportunity.
- **Streamline the Green Card application process** for H-1B workers hired into permanent positions, which would increase their ability to contribute to American manufacturing’s long-term development.
- **Keep H-1B fees and associated costs at a reasonable level** to maintain the program’s availability for all employers, including small and medium-sized manufacturers.
- **Maintaining the program’s existing wage requirements and increasing federal oversight** of H-1B-dependent employers, to end abuses and ensure that the use of H-1Bs does not displace or disadvantage American workers.

The H-1B program is vital to achieving America’s manufacturing resurgence. These targeted reforms will enhance manufacturers’ ability to access a global pipeline of high-skilled STEM talent and support innovation here in the U.S.

Modernize the Lawful Permanent Resident Program (Green Cards)

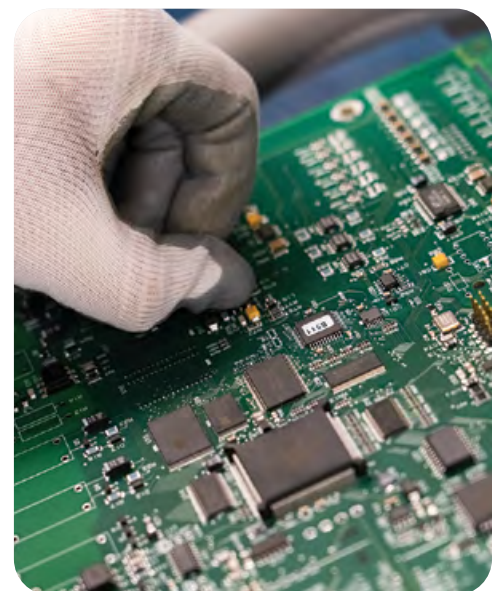
Manufacturers recommend modernizing the Lawful Permanent Resident program, also known as the Green Card. Employment-based Green Cards—140,000 of which are available each year—are essential to modern manufacturing because they allow employers to retain foreign professionals who are trained and contributing to economic growth under temporary visas, including critical engineers and technicians.

The EB-2 Green Card category, in particular, is available to high-skilled workers who hold a master's degree, those with a bachelor's degree plus five years of professional experience or individuals who can demonstrate "exceptional ability" in their field. Currently, the EB-2 category can only make up 28.6% of the 140,000-per-year cap for employment-based Green Cards. In effect, this limits the American economy to just over 40,000 of these high-impact workers each year—only a share of which goes to manufacturing. This puts extreme pressure on manufacturers' ability to access the high-skilled talent necessary for innovation in the sector.

To bolster the industry's ability to fill critical skill gaps and provide long-term stability for innovators who keep America's production lines competitive, manufacturers recommend the following:

- **Significantly raise the cap for employment-based Green Cards.** These are capped at approximately 140,000 individuals per year, which is inadequate to meet America's economic needs.
- **Not count spouses and minor children of employment-based immigrants toward the numeric cap for employment-based Green Cards,** roughly half of which have gone to workers in recent years, while the other half have gone to spouses and children.⁹
- **Remove the limitation on the share of the overall Green Card cap that can go to high-skilled employment-based immigrants under EB-2.** This would allow valuable workers to continue to contribute to the manufacturing economy over the long term—an important supplement to H-1B visas, which, unlike Green Cards, are not permanent.
- **Phase out the Green Card diversity lottery and reallocate its 55,000 cap to employment-based Green Cards,** which would boost by more than one-third the number of employment-based Green Cards and thus allow manufacturers to invest in and rely on their immigrant workers over the long term.

Offering certain foreign workers the prospect of stable, long-term employment in the U.S. is critical to companies' ability to attract and retain them. These improvements to the Green Card program will bolster manufacturers' ability to attract these professionals and leverage their expertise into U.S. growth, expansion and production. They will also ensure that we're prioritizing economic growth in this process, which is a win for all Americans.





Create a Dedicated Manufacturing Visa Office

Manufacturers in the U.S. must be able to respond quickly to changing market conditions and customer demand. That's the only way to outpace foreign competitors. As such, manufacturers need a **dedicated visa office that expedites visa issuance**, which will give them confidence that their investments will not be stuck in the starting blocks when they cannot bring in their experts to design and build factories and train American workers to operate them.

The difficulty and processing delays that manufacturers face to secure visas—in particular, L-1 (intracompany transfers of executives and managers as well as employees with advanced knowledge of their company's products and systems) and H-1B (foreign workers in specialty occupations) visas—run directly counter to their efforts to invest in the development of manufacturing capacity in the United States. A dedicated visa office would prevent delays and uncertainty and free manufacturers to invest and grow with confidence. Not only that, by proving we can do things faster and more efficiently than other nations, it will be a source of pride for America.

2. A Pathway to Meet America's Essential Manufacturing Labor Needs

Shop floor workers, including welders, machinists and technicians, are the backbone of modern manufacturing. Manufacturers need more skilled hands to produce the goods that power the American economy, yet the industry faces an acute workforce challenge: more than 400,000 manufacturing jobs are currently unfilled, and the largest share are in these essential roles. Manufacturers are investing in attracting, training and upskilling the homegrown workforce, and they need to be able to supplement these efforts with immigrant workers.

However, America's immigration system was never built with the skills needed to power the American manufacturing workforce in mind. It offers few practical pathways for essential workers who are ready to contribute when domestic labor alone cannot meet demand. Manufacturers need a modern, merit-based, employment-driven immigration framework that includes visa programs for both year-round and seasonal industrial workers.



“ Shop floor workers are the backbone of modern manufacturing, and yet the industry faces an acute workforce challenge: more than 400,000 manufacturing jobs are currently unfilled, and the largest share are in these essential roles.”

— Carolyn Lee, President and Executive Director, the Manufacturing Institute

Create a Year-Round Guest Worker Program for Foreign-Born Essential Workers

Manufacturers make significant investments to attract, train and upskill our U.S. workforce. By partnering with local community and technical colleges, we develop a qualified talent pipeline and offer advancement opportunities for students, veterans and current employees. Our competitive pay and benefits help us retain staff, and we are modernizing our shop floors to improve safety and innovation, making manufacturing a career of pride. Manufacturers are committed to working with the government to build and equip the next generation of American workers. However, **until both public- and private-sector efforts to attract and train homegrown talent can meet industry demand fully, the U.S. needs additional workers to fill the jobs that continue to go unfilled by the domestic workforce.**



“ They have to come in through merit. They have to come in legally, they have to apply, and they have to work hard.”

— President Donald Trump

A guest worker program—for immigrant workers with less than a bachelor’s degree—would allow manufacturers to bring foreign-born workers into the U.S. to work year-round, based on U.S. economic demand and provided that unemployment remains low. This would include both technical roles, including welders, machinists and technicians operating or maintaining equipment—72% of manufacturers are trying to hire more of these workers¹⁰—as well as lesser-skilled roles essential to production, such as line workers, assemblers and warehouse workers.



Essential shop floor workers are the heart of manufacturing in America. They keep supply chains moving, making the goods that drive economic growth. As automation and AI reshape the shop floor, their skills and practical know-how are indispensable in adapting to new tools and ensuring quality. A modern legal immigration system that helps manufacturers recruit and attract essential workers for jobs left unfilled by the current domestic workforce will allow industry to expand production and accelerate innovation. Such a program will ensure America can reshore lost manufacturing capacity and continue to compete on a global scale.

Key elements of a manufacturing-centric guest worker program would include the following:

- A **flexible annual cap** that adjusts based on the workforce needs of the manufacturing industry and the U.S. economy
- **Employer and worker accountability**, including labor market tests and proof of job confirmation
- **Portability** among approved employers to prevent exploitation
- **Limited duration** and renewable under defined conditions

A guest worker program would supercharge manufacturing growth by supporting American talent at a time when the industry is working to increase investment here at home.

Strengthen and Expand Seasonal Worker Programs

Manufacturers recommend reforming the H-2A and H-2B seasonal visa programs to expand them to more employers and workers and to provide for longer-term employment for temporary workers. Though traditionally viewed as agricultural and hospitality visas, respectively, these programs are increasingly relevant to manufacturing sectors facing acute workforce shortages, particularly with changing seasonal production demands. However, restrictive program design and eligibility rules prevent manufacturers from leveraging these programs effectively.

H-2A and H-2B pathways provide lawful ways for U.S. employers to fill critical jobs when there are not enough available domestic workers. Reforming these programs to better reflect the evolving needs of modern manufacturing will help ensure continuity in production, prevent supply chain disruptions (such as in agriculture and food processing) and further manufacturing growth and global competitiveness.



Program reforms should include the following:

- Broaden eligibility definitions so that manufacturers facing legitimate seasonal shortages can participate.
- Index the caps to labor-market data rather than arbitrary numerical limit.
- Allow vetted manufacturers faster processing, streamlined certification and multiyear approvals.
- Increase oversight and monitor for fraud and abuse of programs.

Strengthening and expanding the seasonal visa programs on which cyclical manufacturing sectors increasingly depend will boost capacity across the industry. Importantly, it will also bring much-needed relief to American families hurt by the high prices of consumer goods, production delays and disruptions.



Provide Certainty and Stability for Employers of Workers Brought to the U.S. as Children

Many manufacturers legally employ adults who now face legal uncertainty due to how they were brought to the U.S. as children. These workers enhance manufacturing productivity and fill a wide range of jobs—but the legal uncertainty they face, due to the mistakes and mismanagement of previous administrations, also creates business uncertainty that could slow growth. These workers need to focus on their jobs—and manufacturers need to focus on making more investments—instead of navigating legal ambiguities. The industry cannot afford to let this problem fester or leave this workforce potential untapped.¹¹

Manufacturers recommend providing a stable legal status that allows this population to live and work in the United States. Certainty and a legal work authorization status for these individuals mean stability for employers, communities and America’s manufacturing strength.



Endnotes

1. https://themanufacturinginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Digital_Skills_Report_April_2024.pdf
2. For examples of industry-recognized courses and certifications offered by community colleges, see <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/04/indiana-college-manufacturing-talent-skills-gap/>. For examples of manufacturers’ heavy investments into upskilling their workforce in the age of AI, see <https://www.manufacturingdive.com/news/mercedes-benz-investing-22b-ai-artificial-intelligence-reskilling-upskilling/689609/> and <https://www.manufacturingdive.com/news/caterpillar-pledges-100-million-to-upskill-workforce-ai-era-centennial/746046/>
3. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-industries/advanced-manufacturing>
4. The MI helps build a manufacturing workforce prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Through implementing groundbreaking programs, convening industry leaders and conducting innovative research, the MI furthers individual opportunity, community prosperity and a more competitive manufacturing industry. As the 501(c)3 nonprofit workforce development and education affiliate of the NAM, the MI is a trusted adviser to manufacturers, equipping them with solutions to address the toughest workforce issues.
5. https://themanufacturinginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Digital_Skills_Report_April_2024.pdf
6. <https://nam.org/mfgdata/facts-about-manufacturing-expanded/>
7. National Association of Manufacturers analysis of data from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, H-1B Employer Data Hub, incorporating employer-level petition outcomes and beneficiary country-of-origin data. Available at: <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/h-1b-employer-data-hub>
8. <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/h-1b-employer-data-hub>
9. <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/yearbook/2023/table7>
10. NAM Manufacturers’ Outlook Survey for Q4 2025.
11. For example, it has been estimated that terminating the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program alone would cost the manufacturing sector an estimated \$28 billion and 14,000 jobs. See https://wp.coalitionfortheamericandream.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/250602_C4AD_DACAReport_Update_Web-2.pdf



The future of America’s economy – and manufacturing’s capability to take full advantage of President Trump’s policy vision to revitalize our industry – depends on the strongest, most dynamic workforce possible. That’s a workforce that we will develop through investing in American workers while also revitalizing our legal immigration system.

With more than 400,000 open manufacturing jobs, manufacturers know that achieving true American manufacturing dominance requires a modern workforce strategy, and that begins with predictable rules of the road and a merit-based, employment-driven immigration system.

Manufacturers believe our country’s leaders have not only an obligation to fix this system but also an opportunity to redesign it in a way that strengthens the economy and our workforce: securing our borders and strengthening

enforcement and verification programs like E-Verify while creating legal pathways that work for both high-skilled scientists, researchers and engineers who power innovation as well as the essential factory floor and supply chain workers who keep production moving.

These policy changes will drive innovation and fuel the long-term manufacturing growth championed by President Trump. Because when manufacturing wins, America wins.



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