

DIANNE FEINSTEIN
CALIFORNIA



COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY - RANKING MEMBER
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

I am writing to express my concern about the State Department's decision to suspend visa processing at the U.S. Embassy and consulates in Mexico relating specifically to the issuance of agricultural visas. While the Department has said it will prioritize the processing of returning workers, there are specific steps that should be taken to further streamline this process.

The ability to harvest food is critical to our nation's food security, particularly during a national emergency. I ask that you consider the food security needs of our nation and take every precaution necessary to protect public health during the coronavirus pandemic. Interrupting the issuance of H-2A agricultural visas – particularly for returning workers who have no inadmissibility concern – harms our national interests and may cause an interruption to our food supply in the midst of a global pandemic.

I respectfully request that the State Department recognize H-2A visas as "essential," and prioritize processing and waive in-person interviews for returning H-2A workers who have received an H-2A visa in the last two years.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator