

Javier Palomarez, USHBC President & CEO, Responds to Secretary Mullin's Call for Employment Visa Reform

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At the National Governors Association Summer Meeting in Oklahoma City over the weekend, Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin called for changes to employment-based visa programs to address labor shortages across the American economy. Mullin argued the country needs immigration reform while drawing a distinction between individuals pursuing legal status and those present in the United States illegally, later reiterating his opposition to amnesty for individuals unlawfully present in the United States.

While the workforce has changed and employers face new demands, the core statutory caps and regulations governing many employment-based visa pathways have remained largely unchanged. Agriculture, construction, hospitality, manufacturing, and elder care continue to report chronic labor shortages that existing visa programs cannot adequately address. [In a June survey of 1,012 Texas Hispanic business owners](#) conducted by the United States Hispanic Business Council, 1 in 5 reported losing an employee to deportation in the past year. Construction, food service, and tourism reported the greatest workforce disruption.

Javier Palomarez, USHBC President and CEO, issued the following statement:

"I have long said that immigration reform is an economic imperative. Every discussion about the future of the American economy has to include the workforce that keeps it moving.

Businesses cannot build homes, harvest crops, or care for an aging population if they cannot



hire the workers those jobs require. The current employment-based visa system no longer reflects the realities of the modern economy, and American businesses are paying the price.

A secure border and a legal immigration system that gives employers access to the workforce they need should go hand in hand. A strong economy depends on both.

Congress has left key employment visa caps and regulations largely unchanged as workforce needs have evolved. That has real consequences for employers trying to fill open positions and for small businesses that have to postpone expansion because they cannot find enough workers. Those pressures can delay expansion and raise costs for businesses and consumers, putting even more pressure on businesses already operating on tight margins. If we are serious about strengthening the American economy, then modernizing our employment-based visa system has to be part of that conversation."

Palomarez continued:

"Any serious effort to modernize employment visa programs deserves engagement from the business community and from lawmakers in both parties. The USHBC regularly surveys employers directly about workforce disruption, and we are ready to bring that data to anyone in Washington willing to work on the problem."

The USHBC urges the Administration and Congress to advance employment-based visa reform that gives American employers the lawful workforce channels their businesses depend on while maintaining secure borders. Existing proposals, such as the [Dignity Act](#), led by Congresswoman Maria Elvira Salazar (R-FL) and Congresswoman Veronica Escobar (D-TX), and the [State Sponsored Visa Pilot Program Act](#), led by Senators John Curtis (R-UT) and Mark Kelly (D-AZ), have been endorsed by the USHBC. The USHBC stands ready to engage with the Department of Homeland Security, Members of Congress from both parties, and industry stakeholders on this issue.

To learn more about USHBC's work, follow @myushbc and @JPalomarez on X. Visit ushbc.com/join to become a member today.

About the USHBC

Javier Palomarez is the President & CEO of the United States Hispanic Business Council (USHBC). The USHBC is a leading voice for the small business community. A 501(c)6 non-profit organization, the USHBC focuses on the success of American small businesses by ensuring they have a voice in the national dialogue. The USHBC is a nonpartisan organization.

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