

October 3, 2017

The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and Mountain Plains Agriculture Service (MPAS) on behalf of the 88,000 sheep producing families of the United States, and employers of shepherders, shearers and range livestock workers, supports the introduction, consideration and approval of the "Agricultural Guestworker Act of 2017" (AG Act).

The sheep industry values and depends on a special class of sheep herders to care for over one-third of all the sheep in America, and have done so since the 1950's. We are greatly appreciative of language in the AG Act that would codify special procedures and provisions that have proven critical to shepherding and sheep shearing, functions that our farmers and ranchers could not live without.

As you well know, over half of the federal regulations of the current H-2A program apply specifically to the shepherding and range livestock industries. The Ag Act will not only maintain the special procedures provisions most important to our producers, but will provide additional support structure and opportunity, giving our producers a fighting chance in an increasingly difficult environment, while protecting both U.S. and foreign ag workers.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you and the committee for recognizing the needs of our industry and pledge our support for the Ag Act.

American Sheep Industry Association

Mountain Plains Agriculture Service