

Assemblymember Ash Kalra  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0025

**Re: AB 1362 (Kalra) Foreign Labor Contractor Registration**

Dear Assemblymember Kalra,

As all of the living former U.S. Ambassadors to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, we write today in support of AB 1362 (Kalra). Across partisan divides and multiple Administrations – those of George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden -- we had the opportunity to lead US efforts against worker exploitation and to challenge our international partners to do better. Through AB 1362, California can once again lead the world in the fight against trafficking and abuse, in the spirit of the California Supply Chain Transparency Act and the task force and training efforts of the last decade.

Each year in the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report we documented how foreign labor recruiters (FLRs) exploited those who legally travel for work. The abuses do not just occur “over there,” but take place in the US – and especially in the economic powerhouse of California. Abuses include imposition of illegal recruiting fees, visa charges, and transportation costs, as well as overcrowded housing, indecent labor conditions, and threats of blacklisting and deportation if complaints are reported. The majority of National Human Trafficking Hotline cases involving foreign workers involve temporary work visas and foreign labor recruiters, as opposed to public perceptions of human trafficking as kidnapping or illegal immigration.

Even though unskilled foreign laborers on H-2A visas laboring in our fields and vineyards are the most exploited groups (not only in California, but nationwide) corrupt FLR practices affect also California’s tech industry, the other major driver of the state’s economy. Abusive FLRs entice corporations with the promise of cheaper labor by substituting vulnerable and compliant foreign workers for Californians. In giving these entities an unfair competitive advantage over companies who play by the rules, it is not just foreign workers who suffer, but displaced U.S workers and law-abiding businesses as well.

California is the fifth largest economy in the world and attracts the most foreign temporary workers of any U.S. state. The vast majority of these workers rely on the services of FLRs. Given the magnitude of the problem and the resulting inequities negatively affecting individual workers (both foreign and domestic) and California’s competitive landscape, we enthusiastically support AB 1362.

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you or your staff would like to discuss further, Ambassador C.deBaca can coordinate. He can be reached at (703) 470-1171 or [lou.debaka@gmail.com](mailto:lou.debaka@gmail.com).

Sincerely yours,

Ambassador (ret.) Nancy Ely-Raphel  
(2001-2003)

Ambassador (ret.) Mark P. Lagon  
(2007-2009)

Ambassador (ret.) Luis C.deBaca  
(2009-2014)

Ambassador (ret.) Susan P. Coppedge  
(2015-2018)

Ambassador (ret.) John Cotton Richmond  
(2018-2021)

Ambassador (ret.) Cindy Dyer  
(2023-2025)