



Summary Statement of Nick Sabino

President, Deer Park Roofing

On behalf of the National Roofing Contractors Association

“Immigration and the Small Business Workforce”

House Committee on Small Business

May 22, 2019

Chair Velazquez, Ranking Member Chabot and members of the Committee;

My name is Nick Sabino and I am president of Deer Park Roofing in Cincinnati, Ohio. I now serve as Chairman of the Board-elect of the National Roofing Contractors Association and am testifying on behalf of NRCA today. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss the need for immigration reform that meets the workforce needs of small businesses and the consumers we serve.

Deer Park Roofing was founded in 1996 and we currently employ 125 professionals. Our goal is to continue growing by meeting our customers’ needs, but the biggest obstacle to growth is the inability to find qualified applicants to meet demand. We recently hired several new employees but still need 10-15 more to keep up with our record backlog of work.

We have worked hard to develop innovative solutions to the challenges of recruiting new employees. We created an employee development program which focuses on skills assessment, mentoring, promotion from within, and providing career paths for all associates. We now work with three technical schools, three high schools and seven recruiting partners.

Chronic and widespread shortages of qualified workers are the most significant limitation on the ability my company and other roofing contractors to grow our businesses. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, job openings in construction increased to 360,000 in March, the *highest level ever* recorded. NRCA estimates workforce shortages cause an estimated \$7.5 to \$15 billion in annual lost economic activity. This problem will become even more severe in the future due to an aging workforce and other demographic trends.

The large number of job openings that we face is having a negative impact on production and wages across our supply chain. Manufacturing and distribution were basically flat in 2018 primarily due to the lack of workforce. We are being forced to turn work down which is causing slowdowns in both commercial and residential construction.

**NATIONAL ROOFING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION | WASHINGTON OFFICE**

To address this situation, NRCA is pursuing a two-track strategy: 1) expanding and improving career and technical education opportunities and 2) supporting immigration reform that meets workforce needs.

Regarding the first strategy, NRCA has developed ProCertification, a comprehensive program that aims to promote professionalism and expand career paths for new and existing workers. We believe the success of ProCertification will help attract more Americans to a career in roofing.

But no matter how successful this effort is, we know it will not be enough to fully address our future workforce needs given the demographics our country faces. This is why NRCA supports immigration reform that addresses the workforce needs of small businesses like Deer Park Roofing. I will outline a few steps Congress can take to meet this goal.

NRCA supports the “Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act,” H.R. 1740, legislation designed to meet workforce needs in roofing and other industries that require critical skilled workers. It would establish a two-track system that matches willing employers with willing temporary workers and provides more visas in times of economic strength and fewer during downturns. It will ensure employers undertake vigorous recruitment to hire U.S. workers first while enabling job creators to obtain the workers needed to meet consumer demand and grow their businesses.

NRCA believes H.R. 1740 is vital to the future workforce needs of the roofing industry and urges members to cosponsor this innovative legislation.

NRCA also urges Congress to provide a permanent solution for employees now working under Temporary Protected Status and individuals who came to the U.S. as minor children and are now undocumented, many of whom are in the DACA program. I especially want to thank Chair Velazquez for her leadership to address the TPS issue through the “Dream and Promise Act,” or H.R. 6. My written statement contains more details on why the need for TPS reform is important to the roofing industry and many hard-working individuals.

To conclude, workforce shortages are the single biggest challenge facing the roofing industry. NRCA urges lawmakers to work on a bipartisan basis in support of reforms to our immigration system that address both the workforce and security needs of the American people.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views today, and I would be pleased to answer any questions.