



News Release

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"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"

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NMPF Statement on Failure of House Immigration Bill *From Jim Mulhern, President and CEO of NMPF*

ARLINGTON, VA – “We are extremely disappointed that Congress did not include an agricultural guestworker element as part of its compromise immigration reform bill that ultimately failed today. The U.S. dairy industry continues to face serious challenges obtaining and maintaining a reliable workforce, and we were hopeful that we can achieve a better outcome for farm employers.

“We were encouraged by negotiations over the weekend that would have added a farm guestworker visa program, including multiple NMPF-backed improvements. This effort to expand the appeal of the overall measure demonstrated the need to tackle the farm worker issue sooner rather than later. We commend Reps. David Valadao (R-CA), Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Jeff Denham (R-CA) for their exemplary negotiations on this bill. We also thank House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) for his ongoing efforts to establish a farm guestworker visa program, as well as House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-TX) for his work to secure key improvements. Finally, we wish to thank the many members who elevated and prioritized the needs of dairy farmers in conversations with House leadership and committee chairmen over the course of many months.

“However, we are deeply disappointed that a small group of House members chose to undermine this good work by refusing to compromise, undermining good faith negotiations and ultimately preventing forward progress. This kind of hostage-taking cannot continue if Congress is to make meaningful progress on a critical issue for our country. We know there are many members in both parties who are eager to forge solutions to these complicated issues, and we are hopeful that this is not the end of the process. Dairy cannot wait any longer.

“We hope that the agriculture guestworker provision will be brought to the House for a vote later this summer as we continue to work with our congressional allies to create legislation that addresses our concerns.”

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The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the

well-being of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF's cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more on NMPF's activities, visit our website at www.nmpf.org.