



NCAE News Brief SPECIAL EDITION AND HEALTH CARE POLICY UPDATE AND ACTION ALERT!!!

July 14, 2009

SEE PAGE 2 FOR ACTION REQUESTED IMMEDIAETLY—TODAY IF YOU ARE IN THE STATES OF: AK, AZ, CT, GA, IA, KS, MA, MD, NC, NH, NM, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, UT, VT, WA, WY !!!

- The President will be pushing Congress hard on health care reform now that he has returned from his travels. Things may move quickly this week and next. It is important that Agriculture not be left behind. NCAE is working closely with several Members and Allies who are engaged in the Health Care Issue. It is critical that the framers of this legislation not lose sight of the unique needs of Agricultural Employers, particularly on the issues of temporary/seasonal employment.
- Senator Kay Hagen (D, NC) has an amendment ready to exempt Temporary/Seasonal agricultural workers. Although we would like the definitions to include MSPA, she does now cite FLSA and we need to support this amendment. For the House side, as soon as text available, we will propose (along with our allies) text to do the same there, including MSPA definitions of seasonal/temporary
- Activists are already pressuring U.S. Hagan in opposition to her amendment excluding temporary/seasonal Agricultural Workers from being counted toward employer health care mandates for full-time employees (FTE.) Hagan's office indicated to American Farm Bureau representative they need to hear from the Agriculture side quickly. See the article from the left-leaning NC The Progressive Pulse: <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2009/07/13/hagans-farmworker-amendment-still-objectionable/> Note that this publication is a "blog" and therefore should only be taken to represent the opinion of the blogger. It is entirely possible that this writer and/or the organization she represents is the only entity who has actually opposed the Hagan amendment, but if they are the only side heard, they may influence the outcome.



ACTION ALERT

July 14, 2009

SENATE Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) mark-up.

ISSUE: The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee will continue its mark-up of health care legislation beginning at 10:00 on Tuesday.

Sen. Kay Hagan (D-N.C.) will offer an amendment to exclude temporary and seasonal workers from the requirement that an employer provide them with health insurance or pay a tax. The amendment also clarifies that employers of temporary and seasonal workers won't be disqualified from tax incentives designed to help small employers afford health insurance for their employees.

IMPACT:

- For small growers, and especially for those who hire seasonal or temporary workers, the administrative and financial burdens of a blanket employer mandate (25 or more employees) could be overwhelming resulting in more US food production pushed off-shore.
- We do not even know if affordable short-term coverage would be available for temporary or seasonal agriculture workers.
- There are questions about who would be responsible to provide health care coverage in cases where a seasonal or temporary worker has multiple employers.
- Small growers could be ineligible for tax credits that help with insurance costs if seasonal or temporary workers push them over the maximum number of employees allowed.

ACTION:

IF YOUR U.S. SENATOR IS ON THE FOLLOWING LIST (HELP Committee) PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (RIGHT AWAY IF POSSIBLE debate is probably ongoing this morning) ASKING THAT THEY SUPPORT THE HAGAN AMENDMENT.

<u>State</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>E-Mail</u>	<u>Phone</u>
AK	Murkowski	Murkowski.senate.gov	202-224-6665
AZ	McCain	McCain.senate.gov	202-224-2235
CT	Dodd	Dodd.senate.gov	202-224-2823
GA	Isakson	Isakson.senate.gov	202-224-3643
IA	Harkin	Harkin.senate.gov	202-224-3254
KS	Roberts	Roberts.senate.gov	202-224-4774
MA	Kennedy	Kennedy.senate.gov	202-224-4543
MD	Mikulski	Mikulski.senate.gov	202-224-4654
NC	Hagan	Hagan.senate.gov	202-224-6342
NC	Burr	Burr.senate.gov	202-224-3154
NH	Gregg	Gregg.senate.gov	202-224-3324
NM	Bingaman	Bingaman.senate.gov	202-224-5521
OH	Brown	Brown.senate.gov	202-224-2315
OK	Coburn	Coburn.senate.gov	202-224-5754
OR	Merkley	Merkley.senate.gov	202-224-3753
PA	Casey	Casey.senate.gov	202-224-6324
RI	Reed	Reed.senate.gov	202-224-4642
TN	Alexander	Alexander.senate.gov	202-224-4944
UT	Hatch	Hatch.senate.gov	202-224-5251
VT	Sanders	Sanders.senate.gov	202-224-5141
WA	Murray	Murray.senate.gov	202-224-2621
WY	Enzi	Enzi.senate.gov	202-224-3424