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For Immediate Release

Contact: John Hollay, President and CEO
(202) 629-9320

NCAE, Ag Community Share Support for Secretary Sonderling's Nomination to Secretary of Labor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Council of Agricultural Employers (NCAE) announced its strong support for the nomination of Keith E. Sonderling to serve as the permanent Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Leading a broad, nationwide coalition of ag stakeholders, NCAE transmitted a [joint support letter](#) to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) ahead of Thursday's highly anticipated confirmation hearing, urging his swift approval.

"American agriculture simply cannot function without a reliable, legal, and stable workforce," explained John Hollay, NCAE's President and CEO. "Our farmers, ranchers, growers, and producers deserve a Secretary of Labor who understands the critical importance of American agriculture and the operational realities of running a farm. Throughout his time at the Department, Secretary Sonderling has proven that he listens to agricultural employers, values compliance and education, and understands what it takes to help American agriculture thrive. As leaders of American Agriculture from across the nation, we urge Chairman Cassidy, Ranking Member Sanders, and the entire U.S. Senate to swiftly confirm Secretary Sonderling so he can continue this vital work at full steam."

Currently serving as Acting Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Labor, Sonderling brings extensive federal regulatory experience to the role. His extensive record includes past service as Acting and Deputy Administrator of the DOL's Wage and Hour Division (WHD), as well as a Commissioner and Vice Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). During his time leading WHD, Sonderling had direct experience navigating the complexities of

H-2A enforcement, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA), and the compliance burdens agricultural employers face.

As Deputy and now Acting Secretary, Sonderling has consistently prioritized regulatory relief for America's agricultural employers. Notably, he ensured the Department release a critical interim final rule, *Adverse Effect Wage Rate Methodology for the Temporary Employment of H-2A Nonimmigrants in Non-Range Occupations in the United States*, 90 Fed. Reg. 47,914 (Oct. 2, 2025), to rein-in inflating wage requirements that were detached from economic reality. He has also overseen a proposed joint employer rule to provide agricultural employers, labor contractors, and farm labor associations with a single, predictable, and nationwide standard.

NCAE's stakeholder letter underscores that the H-2A program remains the primary lawful channel for meeting critical agricultural labor demands. The broad agricultural coalition signing onto the letter represents dozens of major national and regional organizations. As the Senate HELP Committee prepares to review Secretary Sonderling's nomination, the agricultural community stands united behind him as a nominee who possesses direct experience with H-2A enforcement, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and the heavy compliance burdens facing America's agricultural businesses.

About NCAE

Founded in 1964, NCAE is the only national association focusing exclusively on agricultural labor issues from the agricultural employer's viewpoint.