

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 278

Reps. Neyer, Smit, Bezotte, Meerman, Steele, Prestin, Bierlein, Aragona, Fox, Roth, Schmaltz, Martin and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1           A resolution to urge the United States Congress to pass  
2 legislation temporarily freezing the Adverse Effect Wage Rate for  
3 the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Workers Program.

4           Whereas, Michigan farmers participating in the federal H-2A  
5 program must pay temporary foreign workers 18.50 dollars per hour,  
6 the 2024 Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) in Michigan. The Adverse  
7 Effect Wage Rate for agricultural workers in Michigan, which is set  
8 annually by the U.S. Department of Labor, has increased by 85  
9 percent since 2008, with a nearly 30 percent increase since 2019;  
10 and

11           Whereas, Due to a shortage of domestic labor, farmers are

1 increasingly utilizing temporary foreign workers through the H-2A  
2 program to staff their operations. In 2023, approximately 15,000 H-  
3 2A workers were hired in Michigan, the sixth most of any state; and

4       Whereas, According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farm  
5 production expenses in the United States totaled 452 billion  
6 dollars in 2022, a nearly 100 billion dollar increase since 2019.  
7 Congress now has the opportunity to help bring down some of these  
8 rapidly increasing costs for Michigan farmers by freezing the  
9 Adverse Effect Wage Rate; and

10       Whereas, Michigan U.S. Congressman, John Moolenaar, has  
11 introduced the "Supporting Farm Operations Act of 2024," directing  
12 the Secretary of Labor to ensure that the Adverse Effect Wage Rate  
13 for H-2A workers that was in effect on December 31, 2023 remains  
14 the rate through December 31, 2025. Agricultural organizations in  
15 Michigan, including the Michigan Agri-Business Association and  
16 Michigan Pork Producers, have voiced their support for Congressman  
17 Moolenaar's bill as they recognize that if the cost of farming  
18 continues to increase, farms across the state will be forced to  
19 shut down. The loss of farms will be catastrophic for the state,  
20 not only because agriculture is a leading economic engine for  
21 Michigan, but also farms serve as the backbone of our rural  
22 communities; and

23       Whereas, In addition to labor costs, farmers have experienced  
24 skyrocketing price increases in feed, fertilizer, machinery, and  
25 more. Congress should not waste the opportunity to provide much  
26 needed relief from rising costs by ensuring that the Adverse Effect  
27 Wage Rate does not continue to climb; now, therefore, be it

28       Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the  
29 United States Congress to pass legislation temporarily freezing the

1 Adverse Effect Wage Rate for the H-2A Temporary Agricultural  
2 Workers Program; and be it further

3 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the  
4 President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United  
5 States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan  
6 congressional delegation.