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DBA Writes Letter to Wisconsin Congressional Delegation Opposing U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "No-Match" Rules

Green Bay, August 15, 2007 – DBA wrote a letter to the entire Wisconsin Congressional Delegation urging them to oppose the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "no-match" rules, which will require Social Security Administration to notify DHS agents when letters are sent to employers concerning employees with social security numbers that do not match the employee's name and other identifiers. On August 10th, DHS officials announced their intention to post these new "no-match" rules in the Federal Register, along with several others related to immigration enforcement, this week with an effective date in mid-September.

The letter states that industries such as agriculture, with an estimated seasonal workforce that may be 70 percent undocumented, along with construction, hospitality and many other business sectors, anticipate severe disruption of their businesses by year end, when the 90-day compliance period under the rule will take effect. According to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, Wisconsin ranks twelfth in the U.S. in the number of hired farm laborers with 19,275 farms having 73,403 workers. More than half of these workers are foreign-born, according to the Department of Labor. If Wisconsin follows a national trend, many of these foreign-born workers do not have accurate documentation.

Farm families in Wisconsin and around the nation struggle to find domestic labor that meets the ever-expanding needs of their enterprises. DBA is one of hundreds of agricultural organizations around the country who have sought significant and comprehensive reform of the H-2A temporary and seasonal alien agricultural worker program. DBA believes the solution to immigration requires legislative remedies such as those provided in the Agricultural Job Opportunities and Benefits (AgJobs) Bill. This bill is a bipartisan approach, designed to bring much-needed change to the immigration programs that the agriculture industry relies on to bring workers into this country. It is broadly supported by a wide range of agricultural interests.

The Dairy Business Association is an industry organization comprised of dairy producers, corporate and allied industry supporters. DBA promotes the growth and success of all dairy farms in Wisconsin by fostering a positive business and political environment. For more information about DBA, please visit our website at www.widba.com.

DBA advises the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation to revisit the AgJobs bill and find a way to get this legislation to the President for his approval to finally modernize and strengthen immigration policy that will benefit today's agricultural interests.