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## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### AmericanHort Statement on AG Act

Late yesterday afternoon, the House Judiciary Committee approved H.R.4092, the Agricultural Guest Worker Act (AG Act) on a close 17-16 vote. The Committee's action is just the first step in what will be a long and important legislative process. Federal legislation is needed to fully address the labor crisis afflicting agriculture and horticulture in America. In that respect, it is positive that Chairman Goodlatte and the Committee acted and, in doing so, acknowledged that a legal agricultural workforce is essential and that foreign workers have, do, and will continue to play an important role in our farm sector and economy.

From a policy perspective, AmericanHort stands for a three-part solution to the agricultural component of our nation's immigration system challenges: a more reliable worker visa program to meet current and future labor challenges; practical and sensible options for the current workers to attain legal presence, work authorization, and protection for their families; and integrity and compliance certainty in the hiring process.

Since its first draft, the AG Act has had both attractive features and significant limitations. It is unfortunate that some of the bill's shortcomings appear to have been made worse during the Committee mark-up. It is vital that these shortcomings, notably including the cap and current workforce treatment, are addressed as legislation moves through the process. This is especially true if and as the bill is moving in tandem with legislation mandating that all employers use the federal E-Verify program within a short period of time.

AmericanHort leaders, members, and staff have toiled for many years to advance meaningful and sensible immigration reforms to benefit our industry and the American economy. We pledge to continue to work in good faith with leaders and members of both chambers and both parties to get reforms, consistent with our principles, enacted into law.

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Your business will perform better, grow faster and prepare for the future as a member of AmericanHort, the green industry's leading association.

The AmericanHort community includes professionals from all facets of the green industry who call AmericanHort their inspiration, voice, community, success, business partner, leader, and advocate. With \$163 billion of market influence and the generation of 1.15 million jobs, the

horticulture industry is a key player in the global economy. AmericanHort supports businesses in their continuous growth and success with knowledge resources, staff development, in-person meetings, and government advocacy.