

# IAAPA PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

## **IAAPA Signs on to Strengthening Welfare in Marine Settings Act Opposition Letter**



IAAPA signed on to a letter along with 12 other organizations in opposition to the proposed Strengthening Welfare in Marine Settings (SWIMS) Act. The Act would prohibit the breeding, importation, and exportation of certain whale species including orcas, beluga whales, false killer whales, and pilot whales. The legislation ignores the vital contributions made by zoos and aquariums to rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation efforts throughout the world. Much of what is known about the health of these species is gained from the study of animals in professional care.

The legislation also sets a dangerous precedent of letting Congress decide, on a species-by-species basis, which animals should or should not be allowed to be cared for by the experts who work at facilities that are licensed, accredited, and highly regulated. Finally, the legislation deprives the American public the opportunity to experience these species firsthand, informing and inspiring them to care for animals and nature. IAAPA is working with the organizations noted above to discuss next steps.

## **Department of Homeland Security Doubles FY 2023 H-2B Visas**

Over the past year, IAAPA working in conjunction with its state and regional association partners, and other similarly situated local, state, and national organizations, pressured Congress to support and expand H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker visas and BridgeUSA programs.

We are pleased to report that last week the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that it will issue a regulation that will make available an additional 64,716 H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker visas for fiscal year (FY) 2023, on top of the 66,000 H-2B visas that are normally available each fiscal year which began October 1, 2022.

The H-2B supplement includes an allocation of 20,000 visas to workers from Haiti and the Central American countries of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. The remaining 44,716 supplemental visas will be available to returning workers who received an H-2B visa, or were otherwise granted H-2B status, during one of the last three fiscal years. The regulation will allocate these remaining supplemental visas for returning workers between the first half and

second half of the fiscal year to account for the need for additional seasonal workers over the course of the year, with a portion of the second half allocation reserved to meet the demand for workers during the peak summer season.

We will share program details as soon as the final rule is published. In the meantime, thanks to those of you who engaged in the multiple call-to-action campaigns distributed by IAAPA public affairs and in-person meetings.

### **IAAPA's Drone Working Group Convenes in DC**

On September 20, 2022, 13 members of IAAPA's Drone Working Group met in Washington, D.C. with representatives of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), U.S. House Transportation, and U.S. Senate Commerce Homeland Security, to raise awareness of the safety and security risks associated with unauthorized Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) flying above fixed site parks and attractions.

Additionally, we advocated for FAA implementation of Section 2209 (Applications for Designation) and enhanced Counter UAS authority in the re authorization of the Preventing Emerging Threats Act (PETA) of 2018 which expired October 5, 2022. These legislative and regulatory actions are required in order to provide fixed site operators the tools needed to lawfully detect and mitigate unauthorized UAS use.

Unfortunately, U.S. House and Senate negotiations involving proposed statutory language ended in a stalemate. Consequently, Congress passed an extension of the bill with the Continuing Appropriations Resolution (CAR) funded to December 16, 2022. In preparation for that deadline, this week IAAPA signed on to a letter along with 18 other organizations advocating for the legislative and regulatory actions described above. We will keep you informed of coalition efforts moving forward.

Sincerely,



Keith Stephenson  
Director of Public Affairs  
IAAPA North America