



February 22, 2022

The Honorable Susan Collins
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
317 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King
133 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the National Retail Federation (NRF), I write to express our support for the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act of 2023. This common-sense, straight-forward legislation would allow individuals seeking asylum at ports of entry to be eligible for work authorization starting 30 days after they apply for asylum.

The National Retail Federation, the world's largest retail trade association, passionately advocates for the people, brands, policies and ideas that help retail succeed. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., NRF empowers the industry that powers the economy. Retail is the nation's largest private-sector employer, contributing \$3.9 trillion to annual GDP and supporting one in four U.S. jobs – 52 million working Americans. For over a century, NRF has been a voice for every retailer and every retail job, educating, inspiring and communicating the powerful impact retail has on local communities and global economies.

NRF members have a vested interest in ensuring the efficiency and functionality of our nation's legal immigration system, particularly as they contend with the ongoing nationwide worker shortage. This bill would allow asylum seekers to provide for themselves and their families and fill much-needed positions while they await adjudication of their claims.

The bill includes important provisions that will help foster an orderly asylum application process. Applicants utilizing the program must demonstrate that their applications are not frivolous. Further, they must have had their identities verified and their names must have been run through the federal government's terrorist watch lists.

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While NRF is pleased to support this much-needed legislation, we will continue to encourage Congress to move separate legislation to address the many flaws in our broken immigration system. The current system simply fails to meet our nation's needs.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David French". The signature is stylized with a large initial "D" and a cursive "F".

David French
Senior Vice President
Government Relations