

INVESTIGATIONS

Corruption

As Trump pursues mass deportation, his businesses again seek foreign workers

By Robert Maguire April 14, 2025



Illustration by Miru Osuga/CREW

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While President Donald Trump and his administration reiterate the need to “hire American” and crack down on both documented and undocumented immigrants alike, his company is again seeking seasonal foreign workers for one of the luxury resorts he still profits from as president. The request from Trump’s business comes days after his administration released a raft of new seasonal work visas,

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The timeline demonstrates how Trump's company benefits from special interest spending aimed at influencing his administration, while it also takes advantage of his administration's policies.

The *New York Times* recently reported that industry lobbyists anxious about the Trump administration's delayed release of a new batch of H-2B visas, which allow foreign workers to do seasonal work in the United States, held a fundraiser last month at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort. Less than two weeks later, the Trump administration announced that the visas would continue to be issued.

On the same day the fundraiser was reported by the *Times*—just five days after the administration released the new visa spots—President Trump's Bedminster, N.J. country club filed a request with the Department of Labor's Office of Foreign Labor Certification, seeking seven cooks and a bartender. Two days after that, it posted positions for nine servers.

The job openings mark the first time in Trump's second term that his business has sought to hire new foreign workers—though there are listings for open positions at Trump's Virginia winery that were posted last December.

The announcement for the event, held by the Seasonal Employment Alliance's PAC, highlighted the intentional choice of Mar-a-Lago as a venue and framed Trump's businesses as an avenue for influence with the new administration. "Given Trump's victory," the release states, "the Mar-a-Lago event calendar is full and we were very fortunate to have secured a spot on their calendar, especially a night where there is a decent chance President Trump will be there." It notes that the "exclusive opportunity for SEA members" was "due to the generosity of SEA board member and Mar-a-Lago member Peter Petrina." (In addition to being a paying customer at Trump's club, Petrina has contracted with the Trump organization in the past to recruit foreign workers for its properties.)

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nearby course—both of which sold out. And if that didn't offer members enough opportunities to spend money at Trump's businesses, the invitation notes that they can head to another Trump property an hour away, Trump Doral in Miami, and take advantage of special rates for two more nights.

May 01, 2024

The Seasonal Employment Alliance holds what appears to be its first Mar-a-Lago fundraiser, which includes optional lodging and tee times at Trump's nearby golf course. Only the lodging option sold out.

Mar 01, 2025

The cap on H-2B visas is hit, without an announcement from the administration that there would be more. The industry reportedly needed an announcement by April 1 to avoid a backlog in hiring for the summer.

Mar 13, 2025

The Seasonal Employment Alliance's PAC holds another Mar-a-Lago fundraiser from March 13-16, 2025. This time, both the lodging options and the golf tee times sell out, and members are also offered an additional two-night package deal for Trump's Doral resort.

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Mar 26, 2025

The Trump Administration announces a new raft of H-2B visas.

Mar 31, 2025

President Trump's Bedminster, N.J. country club filed a request with the Department of Labor's Office of Foreign Labor Certification for eight foreign workers, seeking seven cooks and a bartender.

Apr 02, 2025

Bedminster posts positions for nine servers under the same program.

It's not clear how much spending this package ended up resulting in, but an event last year offers some baselines. SEA held what appears to be its first Mar-a-Lago fundraiser last May, and FEC reports show at least \$34,000—nearly half the PAC's spending in the 2023-2024 cycle—going to Trump's resort, not counting the planned golf outings at Trump's nearby course and those who made arrangements to stay at Mar-a-Lago as a part of the event. Notably, the announcement only spoke in general terms about Trump's presence at the property—noting it was his residence—and did not offer an additional package stay at Doral.

And this interplay between special interests and Trump's own business interests was all too predictable. Not only does the Trump Organization have a history of hiring undocumented immigrants and passing over American

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he now oversees as president. In 2020, CREW detailed how Trump's businesses benefitted from the actions taken by his administration, including the H-2B visas that provide his business the opportunity to hire the foreign workers he has built a political career on vilifying.

Pouring money into the president's businesses with the hope of getting face time with the president—all while his businesses take advantage of his administration's policies—is one of the clearest demonstrations of the corruption that has been at the core of Trump's public service career.

Last year, Trump's businesses reportedly sought to hire more foreign workers than any prior year on record, and the new data shows that his businesses will continue to seek foreign workers while he is president, one of the very groups of people that he has publicly disparaged for years.

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