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BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST
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June 13, 2024

Julie A. Su
Acting Secretary of Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

Douglas L. Parker
Assistant Secretary of Occupational Safety
and Health Administration
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Room Number N3626
Washington, D.C. 20210

RE: Heat-related injury and illness prevention in the workplace

Dear Assistant Secretary Parker,

I write to you to express concerns around heat-related injury and illness prevention in outdoor and indoor work settings. You may be aware that Florida Governor, Ron De Santis, recently signed HB433 into law to prohibit local governments from enacting heat exposure requirements for employers and contractors. This is extremely harmful to the working population, especially outdoor and agricultural workers, as temperatures increase with climate change. This law also comes after the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a heat hazard alert to remind employers of their obligation to protect workers against heat illness or injury in outdoor and indoor workplaces.

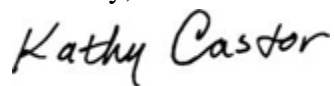
Last year, the Tampa Bay region and its residents lived through the hottest July on record, multiple heat advisories in August, with no predictable change for the coming summer. The heat index regularly exceeded 100 degrees due to oppressive humidity. I am very concerned with the impact of heat stress on my neighbors who work outside including our letter carriers, farmworkers and trades workers. The devastating health and economic consequences of the climate crisis continue to grow, and the Tampa Bay region is particularly at risk for extreme heat and worsening air quality on hot, humid days. Workers deserve access to breaks, appropriate personal protective

equipment, access to water and cooling stations and education on how to recognize heated related illness. We need to take swift action and use every tool at our disposal to strengthen communities' — and workers' — resilience against such extreme heat and weather events.

For years, heat has been the leading cause of weather-related fatalities in the United States. It is important to note that workers, including farmworkers, farmers, firefighters and construction workers, are disproportionately impacted by extreme heat. In October 2021, OSHA began the rulemaking process to consider a heat-specific workplace standard by publishing an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings. In April 2024, OSHA presented the draft rule's initial regulatory framework to the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health, which unanimously recommended that OSHA move forward on a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. As temperatures continue to surpass records and workers suffer under increasingly hazardous conditions, I urge OSHA to move forward expeditiously to propose and finalize a rule to protect workers across the country, including in Florida. In the meantime, I also urge OSHA to continue existing outreach and enforcement efforts in areas where workers are exposed to heat hazards and increase inspections in high-risk industries like construction and agriculture. These actions would align with the agency's National Emphasis Program on heat, announced in April 2022, to focus enforcement efforts in geographic areas and industries with the most vulnerable workers.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my Legislative Assistant Capreece Kelsaw at Capreece.Kelsaw@mail.house.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Castor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

Cc: Jane Castor, Mayor of Tampa
Ken Welch, Mayor of St. Petersburg