

July 5, 2017

Dear Member of Congress:

The undersigned organizations join together to ask you to co-sponsor the Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2017. This bill provides a one-time opportunity for experienced agricultural workers to apply for legal status if they show consistent employment in US agriculture and meet other criteria. This bill is a bridge until comprehensive reform can be enacted and will provide desperately needed legal status for farmworkers to stabilize the agricultural economy.

The legislation reflects the farmworker legalization program found in the comprehensive immigration reform package in 2013. The legislation does not include changes to the H-2A program as those should be solved in the context of comprehensive reform.

During a time when President Trump has declared open season on immigrants and Attorney General Sessions has put the power of the Justice Department behind the deportation machinery, we need to take bold steps to protect farmworkers. As experienced in agricultural communities across the U.S., the impact of President Trump's immigration enforcement in agriculture is dire. Farmworkers make easy enforcement targets, resulting not only in increased fear and vulnerability for farmworkers but also in disruptions to agricultural production.

This bill sends a clear signal that there are leaders in Congress ready to engage constructively on immigration and to move beyond policy by soundbite. The Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2017 would help ensure a stable, legal workforce in agriculture, to the benefit of farmworkers, employers, consumers and the national interest. We encourage you to sponsor this legislation and join this important effort to protect those who put food on our tables and without whom our agricultural system would be laid to waste.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Alianza Americas

Alliance of Baptists

America's Voice

American GI Forum

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)

Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP)

California Church IMPACT

Call for Health Foundation

Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network

CASA of Oregon

CATA - The Farmworkers' Support Committee (NJ, PA, MD, DE)

Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network

Center for American Progress

Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. (CDM)
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Christian Community Development Association
Church World Service
Coalition of Florida Farmworker Organizations
Coalition of Immokalee Workers
Columbia Legal Services (WA)
Committee for Social Justice (NY)
Community Council of Idaho, Inc.
Community Health Center (CO)
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI)
CRLA Foundation (CA)
Disciples Center for Public Witness
Disciples Home Missions (in the U.S. and Canada)
Disciples Justice Action Network
Dominican Sisters of Peace
East Coast Migrant Head Start Project
The Episcopal Church
Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO
Farmworker Association of Florida
Farmworker Justice
Farm Worker Ministry - Northwest
Food Empowerment Project
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition
Greater Rochester Coalition for Immigration Justice (NY)
GreenLatinos
Guatemalan Maya Center (FL)
Hispanic Affairs Project (CO)
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho
Hispanic Federation
Human Agenda (CA)
Idaho Community Action Network
Immigrant Worker Project Ohio
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice (FL)
Interfaith Worker Justice
Justice in Motion
Kids for College (NY)
La Clinica de La Raza (CA)
La Cooperativa Campesina de California
La Union Del Pueblo Entero (LUPE)
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
Latin America Caribbean Committee – Loretto Community
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
League of United Latin American Citizens

Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition
MAFO, Inc.
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)
Missions Ministry Team of Cumberland Presbyterian Church
MOW, Incorporated (MS)
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
National Association of Hispanic Publications (NAHP)
National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures
National Center for Farmworker Health
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
National Council of La Raza
National Employment Law Project
National Farm Worker Ministry
National Guestworker Alliance
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)
National Latina/o Psychological Association
National Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Association
NC Council of Churches
Northwest Forest Worker Center
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers
Organización en California de Líderes Campesinas, Inc.
PICO National Network
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)
Presente.org
Public Justice Center (MD)
Puente de la Costa Sur (CA)
Rural and Migrant Ministry (NY)
Rural Neighborhoods, Incorporated (FL)
Sacred Heart Outreach Center (FL)
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
SER- Jobs for Progress National Inc.
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Shalom- Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Office, School Sisters of Notre Dame (MN)
Sisters of Charity BVM
Sisters of the Humility of Mary
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team
SJSU Human Rights Institute (CA)
Southeast Community Health Systems (LA)
Southern Poverty Law Center
Student Action with Farmworkers

Telamon Corporation
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
U.S.- Mexico Foundation
UFW Foundation
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ)
Unitarian Universalist Migrant Ministry
United Farm Workers
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS)
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI)
United We Dream
United With Migrants, Inc. (CO)
Vecinos Farmworker Health Program (NC)
Voto Latino
Wayne Action for Racial Equality (NY)
We Are Casa
William C. Velasquez Institute (WCVI)
Worker Justice Center of NY
Workers' Center of Central New York