



June 8, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

The Agriculture Workforce Coalition urges the Senate to pass an agriculture labor reform bill this Congress that provides the solution American agriculture needs. We understand the Senate is deliberating broader immigration proposals, and strongly encourage you to include ag labor reform along with those measures.

America's farmers have faced an onslaught of challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic, catastrophic weather events, retaliatory tariffs in our top export markets, and falling commodity prices and farm income just to name a few. However, the domestic labor shortage remains one of their greatest challenges, impacting farmers today and jeopardizing the future of American agriculture. We must address this workforce crisis threatening farms across the United States so our producers can continue to feed, clothe, and fuel our nation. Doing so requires providing stability for our existing workers and key reforms to the H-2A program, the visa program farmers use to hire legal workers to supplement their U.S. workforce. We implore the Senate to put forward its ideas and solutions to pass legislation in a bipartisan manner to address our agricultural workforce challenges.

Farmworkers, who have played an essential role throughout the pandemic, continue to face uncertainty in this country. U.S. agriculture needs a solution for farmworkers to stay and work in agriculture legally. Entire sectors of agriculture struggle to fill open jobs on the farm by not currently having access to the H-2A program due to its seasonal requirement. Producers with year-round labor needs must be eligible to participate in the H-2A guestworker program without arbitrary limits. The existing H-2A program is cumbersome and expensive. H-2A employers are required to pay workers a flawed survey-based wage rate set using data that does not take into account the value of other expensive mandated benefits. Farmers need a predictable wage rate that enables them to budget and ensure their businesses remain competitive in a global marketplace.

Without immediate action by the Senate, the federal government's outdated policies and broken immigration system will force many farmers to consider whether they can continue in labor-intensive agriculture. As representatives of agricultural organizations throughout the United States, we stand ready to help you develop and pass legislation to fully address the needs of American farmers by stabilizing the current workforce, addressing enormous costs to use the H-2A program, and enabling year-round producers to access the H-2A program.

Thank you for your urgent attention to solving America's agricultural labor crisis.

Sincerely,

AWC Steering Committee

American Farm Bureau Federation
AmericanHort
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
National Council of Agricultural Employers
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
United Fresh Produce Association
USAFarmers
U.S. Apple Association
Western Growers

Additional Signatories

A. Duda & Sons
AgCarolina Farm Credit
AgChoice Farm Credit
AgFirst Farm Credit Bank
AgGeorgia Farm Credit
AgriBank FCB
Agricultural Council of California
Agri-Mark, Inc.
Agri-Placement Services, Inc.
Alabama Farmers Federation
Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association
Amalgamated Sugar Company LLC
American AgCredit
American Agri-Women
American Beekeeping Federation
American Cotton Producers
American Dairy Coalition
American Honey Producers Association
American Mushroom Institute
American Seed Trade Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Soybean Association
ArborOne Farm Credit
Arizona Farm Bureau Federation

Arizona Nursery Association
Associated Milk Producers Inc.
Aurora Cooperative Elevator Co.
Bongards' Creameries
California Apple Commission
California Association of Winegrape Growers
California Blueberry Association
California Blueberry Commission
California Canning Peach Association
California Citrus Mutual
California Dairies, Inc.
California Date Commission
California Farm Bureau
California Fig Advisory Board
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Prune Board
California Strawberry Commission
California Walnut Commission
California Women for Agriculture
Cape Fear Farm Credit
Carolina Farm Credit, ACA
Cayuga Marketing
Center for Dairy Excellence (Pennsylvania)
Ceres Solutions Cooperative
Certified American Grown
Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition (VT)
Chobani
CHS, Inc.
CoBank
Colonial Farm Credit
Colorado Farm Bureau
Colorado Nursery & Greenhouse Association
Colorado Potato Administrative Committee
Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers
Community Council of Idaho
Compeer Financial
Cooperative Milk Producers Association
Cooperative Network
Costa Farms
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
Dairy Producers of New Mexico
Dairy Producers of Utah
Delaware Farm Bureau
Delta Council
Diocese Of Boise, Bishop Peter Christensen
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative

Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
Empire State Potato Growers
Far West Agribusiness Association
Farm Credit Council
Farm Credit East
Farm Credit of Central Florida
Farm Credit of Florida
Farm Credit of Northwest Florida
Farm Credit of the Virginias
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
First District Association
First South Farm Credit
Florida Agri-Women
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association
Florida Strawberry Growers Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Food Northwest
Food Producers of Idaho
Foremost Farms USA
Georgia Farm Bureau
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
Georgia Green Industry Association
Georgia Milk Producers, Inc.
Georgia Peach Council
Georgia Urban Ag Council
Glanbia Nutritionals
Hispanic Chamber of Southern Idaho
Idaho – Oregon Fruit and Vegetable Association
Idaho Apple Commission
Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry
Idaho Bankers Association
Idaho Dairymen's Association
Idaho Farm Bureau
Idaho Grower Shippers Association
Idaho Hay and Forage Association
Idaho Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
Idaho Hop Growers Association
Idaho Landscape and Nursery Association
Idaho Milk Processors Association
Idaho Milk Products
Idaho Noxious Weed Control Association
Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association
Idaho Onion Growers Association
Idaho Potato Commission

Idaho State Grange
Idaho State Horticultural Society
Idaho Sugarbeet Growers Association
Idaho Wool Growers Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Illinois Green Industry Association
Indiana Dairy Producers
Indiana Farm Bureau
Indiana Nursery & Landscape Association
Indiana Outdoor Management Alliance
Iowa Institute for Cooperatives
Iowa Nursery & Landscape Association
Iowa State Dairy Association
J.R. Simplot Company
Kansas Cooperative Council
Kentucky Farm Bureau
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Lone Star Milk Producers
Louisiana Association of Cooperatives
Louisiana Cotton and Grain
Louisiana Nursery & Landscape Association
Maine Landscape & Nursery Association
Maine Potato Board
Mainjoy Unlimited LLC
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association
Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation
Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association
MBG Marketing
Melhorn Sales Service & Trucking Company
Michigan Apple Association
Michigan Asparagus Research Inc.
Michigan Farm Bureau
Michigan Milk Producers Association
Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association
Michigan Pork Producers Association
Michigan State Horticultural Society
Michigan Vegetable Council
MidAtlantic Farm Credit
Mid-Kansas Cooperative
Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Milk Producers Council
Minnesota Milk Producers Association
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association
Monterey County Farm Bureau (CA)
Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association

National All-Jersey
National Asparagus Council
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Christmas Tree Association
National Conference State Council of Cooperatives
National Cotton Council
National Cotton Ginners' Association
National Grange
National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
National Onion Association
National Peach Council
National Watermelon Association
National Young Farmers Coalition
NC SweetPotato Commission
Nebraska Cooperative Council
Nebraska State Dairy Association
Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
New England Apple Council
New Jersey Farm Bureau
New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association
New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau
New York Apple Association
New York Farm Bureau
New York State Flower Industries
New York State Vegetable Growers Association
North American Blueberry Council
North Carolina Dairy Producers Association
North Carolina Farm Bureau
North Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association
North Carolina Potato Association
North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northeast Dairy Producers Association
Northern Family Farms, LLP
Northern Plains Potato Growers Association
Northwest Dairy Association
Northwest Farm Credit Services
Northwest Horticultural Council
NW Agricultural Cooperative Council
Ohio Apple Marketing Program
Ohio Dairy Producers Association
Ohio Farm Bureau
Ohio Landscape Association
Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association
Ohio Produce Growers Marketing Association

Olive Growers Council of California
Oneida-Madison Milk Producers Cooperative Association
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
Oregon Essential Oil Growers League
Oregon Farm Bureau
Oregon Seed League
Pacific Coast Producers
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association
Plant California Alliance
Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc.
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania
Rhode Island Nursery & Landscape Association
Scioto Cooperative Milk Producers' Association
Select Milk Producers, Inc.
Society of American Florists
South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
South Carolina Peach Council
South Dakota Association of Cooperatives
South Dakota Dairy Producers
South East Dairy Farmers Association
Southeast Milk, Inc.
Southern States Cooperative
Specialty Crop Farm Labor Contractors, LLC
Sunmaid Growers of California
Sunsweet Growers Inc.
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association
Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council
Texas Association of Dairymen
Texas Nursery & Landscape Association
Tillamook County Creamery Association
U.S. Custom Harvesters
U.S. Durum Growers Association
United Dairymen of Arizona
United Egg Producers
United Onions USA, Inc.
United Potato Growers of America
United Producers, Inc.
UnitedAg
Unity Alliance of Southern Idaho
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
US Sweet Potato Council
Utah Apple Marketing Board

Utah Farm Bureau
Utah Horticulture Society
Valley Fig Growers
Valley Wide Co-op
Ventura County Agricultural Association
Virginia Farm Bureau
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
Virginia State Dairymen's Association
Washington Asparagus Commission
Washington Blueberry Commission
Washington Farm Bureau
Washington Growers League
Washington State Dairy Federation
Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association
Washington State Potato Commission
Washington State Tree Fruit Association
West Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
WineAmerica
Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association

cc: U.S. Senate