

March 12, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act was passed with bipartisan support by the House of Representatives in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress and represents the lengthy cooperative and negotiated efforts of agricultural employers and labor unions. This same bill with minimal updates was reintroduced on March 3, 2021. The undersigned groups, representing a broad cross-section of agriculture and its allies, urge you to again advance this same bill through the House to address the agricultural workforce crisis affecting our nation's farms, and ultimately, our food security.

A stable, legal workforce is needed to ensure the United States will continue to produce an abundant, safe, and affordable food supply. Every farm employee engaged in high-value, labor-intensive crop and livestock production sustains two-to-three off-farm jobs. The critical shortage of these employees not only constrains our farmers and ranchers, but also restricts our global economic competitiveness, hinders local economies, and curbs jobs. As foreign producers take advantage of our workforce labor shortage and gain market share, America will export more of our food production and thousands of these farm-dependent jobs.

Additionally, wage volatility in the H-2A guestworker program makes it extremely difficult for farmers to use the program, as it makes the already expensive and somewhat burdensome program erratic in its price inflation. The recent release of the 2021 Adverse Effect Wage Rates (AEWRs) has once again suddenly increased farmers' labor costs by an average of 5%, with some absorbing increases of nearly 9%, all while revenues for agricultural goods continue to diminish. These AEWR increases far outpace average wage growth across the broader U.S. economy during the same two-year span.

The unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic has further crippled agriculture and increased production costs. The loss of markets, interruption of supply chain logistics, an increasingly insufficient number of employees, and greater price volatility are just a few of the many challenges the pandemic has brought to the industry. All the while, agricultural employers have been resilient, striving to ensure a safe workspace for their employees and serving as a reliable source of jobs. No matter, with production and labor costs far outpacing revenues, agricultural employers will simply not be able to remain in business.

The House must pass legislation that preserves agriculture's experienced workforce by allowing current farm employees to earn legal status and continue to support America's agricultural

industry. This must also include an agricultural worker visa program that provides access to a legal and reliable workforce moving forward. This visa program should be more accessible, predictable, and flexible to meet the needs of producers, including those with year-round labor needs such as dairy and livestock, which currently do not have meaningful access to any program.

While the bill does include some provisions concerning to the agricultural community, we are committed to working together throughout the legislative process to address these issues. It is vital to move the Farm Workforce Modernization Act through the House as a significant step in addressing our labor crisis so American agriculture can continue to feed our nation and the world.

Sincerely,

Additional signatories added after March 12th:

Alabama Farmers Cooperative, Inc.  
Central Valley Ag Coop  
Idaho Horticulture Society  
Idaho Potato Growers Association  
Napa Vintners Association  
National Christmas Tree Association  
Ohio Apple Marketing Program  
Ohio Produce Growers Marketing Association  
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
Snake River Farmers' Association  
Southeast Milk Inc.  
United Dairy Farmers of Florida  
US Chamber of Commerce

African-American Farmers of California  
Ag Valley Cooperative, Non-Stock  
AgCountry Farm Credit Services  
Agribusiness Henderson County (NC)  
Agricultural Council of California  
Agri-Mark, Inc.  
Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association  
Almond Alliance  
Amalgamated Sugar Company  
American AgCredit  
American AgriWomen  
American Beekeeping Federation  
American Honey Producers Association  
American Mushroom Institute  
American Pistachio Growers  
American Seed Trade Association

American Sheep Industry Association (ASI)  
AmericanHort  
Arizona Dairy Producers Trade Association  
Arizona Nursery Association  
Associated Milk Producers Inc.  
Aurora Organic Dairy  
Bluebird Bonanza Farms  
Bongards' Creameries  
CalChamber  
California Apple Commission  
California Association of Food Banks  
California Association of Wheat Growers  
California Avocado Commission  
California Blueberry Association  
California Blueberry Commission  
California Canning Peach Association  
California Cherry Growers and Industry Association  
California Citrus Mutual  
California Dairies, Inc.  
California Date Commission  
California Dried Plum Board  
California Farm Bureau Federation  
California Fig Advisory Board  
California Fresh Fruit Association  
California Pear Growers Association  
California Seed Association  
California State Floral Association  
California Strawberry Commission  
California Sweet Potato Council  
California Tomato Growers Association  
California Walnut Commission  
California Warehouse Association  
California Women for Agriculture  
Cayuga Milk Ingredients  
Center for Dairy Excellence (Pennsylvania)  
Certified American Grown  
Chobani  
CHS Inc.  
Co-Alliance Cooperative, Inc.  
CoBank  
Colorado Dairy Farmers  
Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association  
Colorado Potato Legislative Association  
Cooperative Milk Producers Association  
Cooperative Producers, Inc.  
Costa Farms

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.  
Dairy Producers of New Mexico  
Dairy Producers of Utah  
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative  
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery  
Empire State Potato Growers  
Far West Agribusiness Association  
Farm Credit East  
Farmers Cooperative  
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative  
Federation of Employers and Workers of America  
First District Association  
Florida Agri-Women  
Florida Citrus Mutual  
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association  
Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association  
Florida Strawberry Growers Association  
Florida Tomato Exchange  
Food Northwest  
Food Producers of Idaho  
Foremost Farms USA  
Frenchman Valley Farmers Cooperative Inc.  
Fresh Harvest/Steve Scaroni (CA)  
Fresno County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Georgia Green Industry Association  
Georgia Milk Producers, Inc.  
Georgia Urban Ag Council  
Glanbia Nutritionals  
Idaho Alfalfa/Clover Seed Commission  
Idaho Alfalfa/Clover Seed Growers Association  
Idaho Apple Commission  
Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry  
Idaho Bankers Association  
Idaho Cattleman's Association  
Idaho Dairyman's Association  
Idaho Eastern Oregon Seed Association  
Idaho Grain Producers Association  
Idaho Grower Shippers Association  
Idaho Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Idaho Hop Growers Association  
Idaho Milk Products  
Idaho Mint Growers Association  
Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association  
Idaho Onion Growers Association  
Idaho Potato Commission  
Idaho Sugarbeet Growers

Idaho-Oregon Fruit & Vegetable Association  
Illinois Green Industry Association  
Indiana Dairy Producers  
Indiana Nursery and Landscape Association  
Indiana Outdoor Maintenance Alliance  
International Dairy Foods Association  
Iowa Institute for Cooperatives  
Iowa Nursery & Landscape Association  
Iowa State Dairy Association  
Kansas Dairy Association  
Land O'Lakes, Inc.  
Laurel Springs Nursery, LLC (NC)  
Leitz Farms LLC/Fred Leitz (MI)  
Lone Star Milk Producers  
Madera County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Maine Landscape & Nursery Association  
Maine Potato Board  
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association  
Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association, Inc.  
Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association, Inc.  
MBG Marketing  
McCain USA Inc.  
Michigan Apple Association  
Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council  
Michigan Milk Producers Association  
Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association  
Mid Kansas Cooperative  
Midwest Apple Improvement Association  
Midwest Dairy Coalition  
Milk Producers Council  
Milk Producers of Idaho  
Minnesota Milk Producers Association  
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association  
Missouri Green Industry Alliance  
Montana Nursery and Landscape Association  
Monterey County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association  
National All-Jersey Inc.  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
National Council of Agricultural Employers  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Grange  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Onion Association  
National Potato Council

National Young Farmers Coalition  
Nebraska Cooperative Council  
Nebraska State Dairy Association  
New England Apple Council  
New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association  
New Jersey Nursery & Landscape Association  
New Mexico Chapter, Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association  
New York Apple Association  
New York Farm Bureau  
New York State Flower Industries  
New York State Vegetable Growers Association  
Nezperce Prairie Grass Growers Association  
Nisei Farmers League  
North American Blueberry Council  
North Carolina Dairy Producers Association  
North Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association  
North Carolina Potato Association  
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives  
Northeast Dairy Producers Association, Inc.  
Northern Family Farms LLP, Merrilan, WI  
Northern Plains Potato Growers Association  
Northwest Ag Cooperatives Council  
Northwest Dairy Association/Darigold  
Northwest Horticultural Council  
Ohio Dairy Producers Association  
Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association  
Ohio Landscape Association  
Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association  
Oklahoma Nursery & Landscape Association  
Olive Growers Council of California  
Oneida-Madison Milk Producers Cooperative Association  
Oregon Association of Nurseries  
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association  
Oregon Potato Commission  
Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association  
PennAg Industries Association  
Pennsylvania Cooperative Potato Growers  
Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association  
Plant California Alliance  
Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc  
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.  
Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania  
Reiter Affiliated Companies  
Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association  
San Diego County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Scioto Cooperative Milk Producers' Association

Select Milk Producers, Inc.  
Simplot (edited - J R Simplot)  
South Central Idaho Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
South Dakota Association of Cooperatives  
South Dakota Dairy Producers  
Southeast Milk Inc.  
Southern States Cooperative  
Stanislaus County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Sunkist Growers, Inc.  
Sunmaid Growers of California  
Sunsweet Growers Inc.  
Tennessee Farmers Cooperative  
Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council  
Texas Association of Dairymen  
Texas Citrus Mutual  
Texas Nursery & Landscape Association  
Tillamook County Creamery Association  
Tree Top  
Tulare County Farm Bureau (CA)  
Turfgrass Producers International  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Durum Growers Association  
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
United Dairymen of Arizona  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United Potato Growers of America  
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.  
Utah Apple Marketing Board  
Utah Horticulture Association  
Utah Nursery & Landscape Association  
Utah Tart Cherry Marketing Board  
Valley Fig Growers  
Valley Vision (CA)  
Ventura County Agricultural Association (CA)  
Vermont Dairy Producers Alliance  
Virginia Apple Growers Association  
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association  
Virginia State Dairymen's Association  
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  
Western Growers Association  
Western Plant Health Association

Western States Dairy Producers Association  
Western United Dairies  
Wine Institute  
WineAmerica  
Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association  
Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association  
Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association

cc: U.S. House of Representatives