

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2020

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

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Senator McConnell, Representative McCarthy, and Senator Schumer,

The coronavirus health crisis has presented our nation with challenges unlike any we have seen in our lifetime. During this crisis, our frontline farmworkers are laboring every day to put food on America's dinner table and maintain the world food supply. As this virus threatens the resiliency of our food supply chains, it has never been more important to ensure the well-being of our agricultural producers and workforce. Future legislation in response to the coronavirus pandemic must include protections for these vital members of our communities.

Our nation's food security depends on the ability of farmworkers to continue to work safely to produce our nation's food. We have key recommendations for policies to support farmworkers and contain the spread of COVID-19 in agricultural communities:

- Until the bipartisan Farm Workforce Modernization Act (H.R.5038) can become law, provide our essential agricultural workforce with legal protections from deportation.
- Direct financial assistance to agricultural employers to: provide farmworkers with job security, pandemic premium pay (in line with pay for other frontline workers in our country's critical infrastructure), sick pay, and family leave; and disseminate and implement CDC recommendations on sanitation and social distancing in work sites, employer provided housing and transportation.
- Ensure that farmworker families can feed themselves by working with recipients of federal nutrition funding to have dedicated efforts that specifically target farmworker communities.
- Support the childcare needs of farmworkers by expanding the eligibility for childcare programs, along with additional funding and flexibility for the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program.
- Additional support for community health centers, in particular those in rural, agricultural communities.

Farmworkers need our support. They should not live in fear. As this crisis evolves and Congress continues to explore response packages, we stand ready to work with you to ensure these protections are made available. Hardworking farmworkers deserve and require our action. Their wellbeing and the stabilization of our food supply depend on these actions.

Sincerely,

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar
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Member of Congress

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
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Grace F. Napolitano
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho
Sablan
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Jimmy Gomez
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Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
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Member of Congress

Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Xochitl Torres Small
Member of Congress

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