

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT OF FARMWORKER JUSTICE ON THE REINTRODUCTION OF AGJOBS
Bill would stabilize farm labor force, provide protections for farmworkers

(WASHINGTON DC) Farmworker Justice welcomes the reintroduction of the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits, and Security Act, the compromise known as “AgJOBS.” Farmworker Justice has played an active role in supporting AgJOBS since the compromise was reached. We thank Senator Feinstein for her leadership in support of AgJOBS.

AgJOBS is a unique agreement between farmworker organizations and agricultural employers and Members of Congress from both parties. It has the support of a broad spectrum of organizations, including Latino community leaders, labor unions, civil rights organizations, religious groups and farmworkers themselves.

The reintroduction of AgJOBS represents continued progress towards comprehensive immigration reform while ensuring that Congress meets the unique needs of agriculture. The *status quo* for farmworkers and agricultural employers is untenable and must be reformed. Over 50% of farmworkers are undocumented workers. Their wages are low and they live in the shadows of our society. We depend on the farm labor force for the food on our tables; we need a stable labor supply.

AgJOBS would provide a legal, stable labor supply by offering undocumented farmworkers the chance to earn legal immigration status by meeting stringent past and future agricultural-work requirements and immigration-law obligations. The ability to legalize immigration status is key to enabling farmworkers to bargain for better working and living conditions and reducing high turnover in the industry. AgJOBS also would revise the H-2A agricultural guestworker program in a balanced manner due to concessions made by all sides in this debate.

Farmworker Justice is a national advocacy organization for migrant and seasonal farmworkers with more than twenty-five years of experience on immigration and labor policy.

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