

**Levesque, Jennifer**

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**From:** Lee Greenawalt [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 06, 2021 6:16 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Farm Workforce Modernization Act

Statement to the Merced City Council on Item K.2. (Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021) of the September 7, 2021 Agenda

From: Lee Greenawalt, [REDACTED] Merced

I ask you to oppose The Farm Workforce Modernization Act (FWMA).

This bill creates a limited and complicated path to legal status for farmworkers, expands the exploitative H-2A program without necessary oversight, and unfairly makes the E-Verify system mandatory for the entire agricultural industry. It locks workers into low level agriculture, preventing upward mobility. Farmworkers need stronger protection, including the right to organize and access to legal status, this bill is not the answer. FWMA proposes prerequisites to citizenship that are long and unfair and that restricts their employment to be forced to remain agricultural work in order to reach citizenship. It is not an opportunity, it is an enslavement.

I ask you to support the goal of providing green cards for workers who sacrifice so much during COVID-19 to ensure our food security, and also other measures that would grant status to essential workers. Our collective health depends on the safety and well-being of the people working to feed our communities. Migrant and undocumented workers pay taxes and support our economy. They deserve equal access to all social programs and legal protections including the right to organize.

Our community of Merced and country as a whole will be negatively impacted by the Farm Workforce Modernization bill.

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