

Levesque, Jennifer

From: Gloria Meneses-Sandoval [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 07, 2021 10:07 AM
To: Serratto, Matthew; Ornelas, Jesse; Echevarria, Fernando; Perez, Bertha; Blake, Kevin; Boyle, Sarah; Shelton, Delray
Cc: cityclerk; Dietz, Stephanie
Subject: Merced City Council Agenda Item K.2, September 7, 2021
Attachments: Statement FINAL to the MCC on Item K.2 FWMA 9 7 21.docx

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

From: California Central Valley Journey for Justice

The CA Central Valley Journey for Justice urges you to oppose The Farm Workforce Modernization Act (FWMA) and ensure that it does not pass into law. The sample letters to Senators Feinstein and Padilla express other requests and we oppose the City Council sending the letters.

This bill, which was first introduced in 2019, creates a limited and complicated path to legal status for farmworkers, expands an already exploitative H-2A program without necessary oversight, and unfairly makes the E-Verify system mandatory for the entire agricultural industry.

While farmworkers desperately need stronger protection, including the right to organize and access to legal status, this bill is not the answer. The prerequisites to citizenship proposed by the FMWA will restrict employment choices by requiring that individuals are obligated to remain in agricultural work for years in order to reach citizenship. It is not an opportunity, it is an enslavement. Permanent residency will be anything but swift.

It is not the time to revive legislation crafted under the Trump administration, that gives huge concessions to the grower lobby by linking the H-2A program to the nation's larger and necessary immigration reform. Instead, we encourage you to support President Biden's goal of providing immediate green cards for farmworkers (and millions more) who have sacrificed so much during COVID-19 to ensure our food security, as well as other measures that would grant status to essential workers. Unauthorized migrants pay taxes but are not eligible for most services nor Social Security.

Our collective health depends on the safety and well-being of the people working tirelessly to feed our communities, and migrant and undocumented workers deserve the opportunity to obtain legal immigration status and citizenship, along with 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 this bill and we ask that you assist in making sure that FWMA does not pass into law.

Respectfully submitted,
gloria m sandoval, member
CA Central Valley Journey for Justice
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