

November 4, 2021

The Honorable Todd Young
United States Senate
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Braun
United States Senate
374 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Young and Senator Braun:

The undersigned Indiana agricultural organizations are writing you to assist Indiana agriculture in acquiring an adequate migrant labor workforce.

The House of Representatives recently passed the Farm Workforce Modernization Act. Its aim is to provide our farms and ranches with a stable, properly documented workforce. Senators' Bennett and Crapo are working on similar legislation in the Senate. We are asking your support for their efforts to improve current guest worker laws and help Indiana farmers which are in desperate need of a well-trained, stable workforce.

Earlier this summer Senators Crapo and Bennett released a statement which said "America, especially rural America cannot exist without a reliable workforce that is treated with dignity and respect for the contributions it makes to our society every day". The farmers of Indiana strongly support this statement and believe now is the time to fix our broken system. Currently, Indiana agriculture is experiencing a magnitude of difficulties staffing our farms. The work of caring for animals, milking cows, picking our fruits and vegetables is increasingly being done by an immigrant workforce.

The pandemic has placed a serious strain on our food production system, but it was immigrant workers who proved to be essential by showing up to work every day. Without a stable, reliable workforce, our farming businesses have difficulty competing. A strong agricultural industry is the backbone for a prosperous, vibrant rural Indiana. Agriculture is the economic engine that keeps our small towns and rural communities strong.

Our organizations fully understand the difficult political nature that immigration reform presents to our elected officials, however, any consideration and support for legislation that offers earned legalization to our current workers and immediate family and gives farm families access to a functional guest worker program going forward would be appreciated. The economic vibrancy of our small rural Indiana communities depends on strong small businesses like our Indiana farm families.

Regards,

Indiana Farm Bureau
Indiana Dairy Producers
Red Gold
Fair Oaks Farms
Select Milk Producers, Inc.
Indiana Beef Cattle Association
Indiana Vegetable Growers Association

Indiana Corn Growers Association
Indiana Soybean Alliance
Strauss Veal Feeds
Midwest Veal
Edge Milk Marketing Cooperative
Indiana State Poultry Association