



April 3, 2019

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
Chairwoman, House Judiciary Subcommittee  
on Immigration and Citizenship  
2141 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Buck  
Ranking Member, House Judiciary Subcommittee  
on Immigration and Citizenship  
2141 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lofgren and Ranking Member Buck,

The United States produce industry is in desperate need of a legislative solution to our workforce challenges. For more than a decade United Fresh Produce Association and allied agriculture partners have worked to pass legislation to reform our broken immigration system and help build a legal and reliable workforce.

The attached data tells the story of our declining workforce with limited replacements coming behind. The only solution to ensure our ability to grow and harvest fruits and vegetables in the United States is to provide a path to legal status for our current undocumented workers and to develop a modernized guest worker program that meets the foreseeable needs of growers across the country.

We believe these are the essential provisions of legislation to address the labor crisis in agriculture. For the current workforce, there must be a reasonable transition to legal status for agricultural workers who have been in the United States for several years. In addition, similar legal status must be provided to protect these workers' immediate families – parents and children.

A modernized guest worker program must include the following key elements:

- Year-round visas for workers rather than temporary or seasonal
- A wage rate that is protective of U.S. workers that is fair and predictable
- Inclusion of workers in minimal processing such as cutting fresh fruits and vegetables
- Housing and transportation allowances for foreign workers
- Stronger administrative role by USDA to support U.S. agriculture's needs
- Flexibility for workers/employers in portability with up to three-year visas
- No arbitrary cap on the number of visas; the program must reflect the actual demand for workers in the marketplace.

The United Fresh Produce Association urges you to support immediate legislation that addresses both the challenges of workers currently in the United States, as well as the need to ensure a consistent flow of future workers to harvest the fruits and vegetables in America that help feed our nation and the world.

Sincerely,

Tom Stenzel  
President and CEO

*Founded in 1904, the United Fresh Produce Association serves companies at the forefront of the global fresh and fresh-cut produce industry, including growers, shippers, fresh-cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., United Fresh and its members work year-round to make a difference for the produce industry by driving policies that increase consumption of fresh produce, shaping critical legislative and regulatory action, providing scientific and technical leadership in food safety, quality assurance, nutrition and health, and developing educational programs and business opportunities to assist member companies in growing successful businesses.*