



March 17, 2015

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-329, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Minority Whip  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H- 48, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader McCarthy, Minority Leader Pelosi and Minority Whip Hoyer:

The undersigned organizations and businesses, representing a broad cross section of agriculture, write to express and explain our strong opposition to H.R. 1147, the Legal Workforce Act, which was reported out of the Judiciary Committee.

Mandatory E-Verify would have a devastating impact on our industry in the absence of a legislative solution for agriculture's labor needs. If the House decides to move forward on mandatory E-Verify without also moving a solution for agriculture, such action would cause irreparable harm to farmers across America. Immigration enforcement without a program flexible enough to address the labor needs of fruit, vegetable, dairy, nursery, and other farms, and ranches, will result in many U.S. farmers, their farm employees, and many in their rural communities losing their livelihoods as well as an overall decrease in U.S. agricultural production.

This legislation's effect would extend far beyond the farm gate. If there is no one available to pick the crops or milk the cows, industry sectors that operate upstream and downstream of farm production and harvest will be adversely impacted as well.

Studies have shown that each of the nearly two million hired farm employees, who work in labor intensive agriculture, supports 2 to 3 fulltime American jobs in the food processing, transportation, farm equipment, marketing, retail and other sectors. Mandatory E-Verify without workable labor solutions for agriculture puts these American jobs, and the economies of communities across the country, in jeopardy.

There is no other industry with greater workforce demographic challenges and foreign labor reliance than agriculture. A longer phase-in and/or an exemption from E-Verify is a well-intentioned acknowledgment that agriculture confronts a precarious labor situation, but it does



not move us any closer to the permanent solutions we desperately need. Instead, they place a larger target on the backs of American producers who are following the letter of the law today.

It was encouraging to hear the Committee spend significant time discussing agriculture's unique workforce challenges during the markup. We remain committed to working with the Judiciary Committee and other members of Congress on legislation that addresses agriculture's labor needs. If this Congress were to pass reform legislation that truly addresses agriculture's workforce challenges, farmers would welcome an E-Verify system that is simple, efficient, effective, and certain. However, the negative risk of an enforcement-only strategy with no surety of reform that provides a work authorization for experienced agricultural workers and a new, flexible guest worker program for long term stability leaves farmers and ranchers no other option than to oppose this bill.

In closing, the AWC remains unequivocally opposed to H.R. 1147, the Legal Workforce Act as it does not also address the agricultural workforce crisis. Instead, we believe the path forward is clear—Congress must pass a solution for agriculture that addresses both our current agricultural workforce and creates a new guest worker program to meet future needs, and only then implement a mandatory E-Verify program.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Council of California  
Agricultural Retailers Association  
Agri-Mark, Inc.  
American Agri-Women  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Fruit and Vegetable Processors and Grower Coalition  
American Honey Producers Association  
American Mushroom Institute  
American Sugar Cane League  
AmericanHort  
Apricot Producers of California  
Arizona Nursery Association  
Associated Milk Producers Inc.  
Bongards' Creameries  
CA Women for Agriculture  
California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers  
California Association of Winegrape Growers  
California Canning Peach Association  
California Fresh Fruit Association  
California Sweet Potato Council  
California Tomato Growers Association  
Co-Alliance



CoBank  
Colorado Nursery & Greenhouse Association  
Cooperative Credit Company  
Cooperative Milk Producers Association  
Cooperative Network  
Cortland Bulk Milk Producers Cooperative  
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.  
Dairymen's Marketing Cooperative, Inc.  
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery  
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association  
Farm Credit Council  
Farm Credit East  
Farm Credit West  
Farmers Cooperative Creamery  
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative  
First District Association  
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association  
Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association  
Foremost Farms USA  
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association  
Georgia Green Industry Association  
Georgia Watermelon Association  
GROWMARK, Inc.  
Gulf Citrus Growers Association  
Idaho Dairymen's Association  
Idaho Nursery & Landscape Association  
Illinois Green Industry Association  
Indiana Nursery & Landscape Association  
International Dairy Foods Association  
Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association  
Land O'Lakes, Inc.  
Lone Star Milk Producers  
MainJoy Unlimited, Inc.  
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association  
Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association  
Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association  
MBG Marketing/The Blueberry People  
Michigan Milk Producers Association  
Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association  
Michigan Processing Apple Growers  
MidAmerica Food Processors Association



Mid-West Dairymen's Company  
Milk Producers Council  
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association  
Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association  
National All-Jersey  
National Association of Egg Farmers  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)  
National Christmas Tree Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Cotton Ginners Association  
National Council of Agricultural Employers  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Grange  
National Grape Cooperative Inc.  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Onion Association  
National Peach Council  
National Potato Council  
New York State Vegetable Growers Association's  
NORPAC Foods, Inc.  
North American Blueberry Council  
Northeast Agribusiness and Feed alliance  
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives  
Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc.  
Northeast Dairy Producers Association (NEDPA)  
Northwest Dairy Association  
Northwest Farm Credit Services  
Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association  
Oklahoma Nursery and Landscape Association  
Oneida-Madison Milk Producers Cooperative Association  
Oregon Association of Nurseries  
Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association  
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.  
Premier Milk Inc.  
Reeves Farms of Baldwinsville New York  
Remington Seeds, LLC  
Rhode Island Nursery & Landscape Association  
Salmen Farms  
Scioto County Cooperative Milk Producers' Association  
Select Milk Producers, Inc.



Society of American Florists  
South Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association  
South Dakota Wheat Growers  
South East Dairy Farmers Association  
Southeast Milk, Inc.  
St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc.  
Stevco, Inc.  
Sun-Maid Growers of California  
Sunsweet Growers, Inc.  
Swiss Valley Farms Company  
Teays River Investments  
Texas International Produce Association  
Texas Nursery & Landscape Association  
Texas Vegetable Association  
Tillamook County Creamery Association  
Torrey Farms Inc.  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Sweet Potato Council  
United Dairymen of Arizona  
United Egg Producers  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United Potato Growers of America  
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.  
USA Farmers  
Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association  
Virginia Green Industry Council  
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association  
Virginia State Dairymen's Association  
Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association  
Welch Foods Inc., a Cooperative  
Western Growers Association  
Western United Dairymen  
Wisconsin Green Industry Federation  
Wisconsin Nursery and Landscape Association  
Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association  
Zia Milk Producers, Inc.

CC: U.S. House of Representatives