



## **Support the Agricultural Worker Justice Act!**

**H.R. 4978/S. 2601**, Introduced by Rep. Greg Casar [D-TX-35] and Sen. Peter Welch [D-VT] on July 27th, 2023

### **Background**

The backbone of the agricultural and food industries is the hard labor and countless hours put in by agricultural workers daily. With increasingly larger farms and demand, we need to ensure that the workers packaging and distributing our food have safety standards and protections for injury, illness, and death. They shouldn't be punished for days missed due to sickness or injury. Our nation's agriculture workers also deserve a fair, living wage to recognize the crucial work they do day in and day out. For companies seeking to work with the USDA to provide produce for Americans across the nation, they need to meet a clear cut minimum requirement for food worker safety and compensation before any such contract can be enacted.

### **Summary**

The Agricultural Worker Justice Act would require major food companies to provide decent wages and safe working conditions in order to do business with the federal government. The bill would also establish reforms to protect meat and poultry processing workers and prohibit attendance policies that punish workers for getting sick. Furthermore, the bill would require the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct and submit a report to Congress on the use of temporary, incarcerated, and undocumented workers, including the H-2B nonimmigrant program or any refugee program, in meat processing plants. It is coupled with the Fairness for Small-Scale Farmers & Ranchers Act.