



March 16, 2026

The Honorable Members of the California Congressional Delegation
U.S. Senate & House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Members of the California Delegation:

We write to you urging Congress to lead in advancing meaningful agricultural workforce reforms that better reflect the realities facing today's food and farm economy. America's farmers and ranchers depend on a stable and economically sustainable workforce in order to support our nation's food supply chains.

As many of you are well familiar, this is especially true for California producers. Despite accounting nearly 12% of all U.S. crop receipts, roughly a third of all agricultural workers in the country reside and work in our state. Much of this is due to our abundance of specialty crops, the bulk of which require careful planting, maintaining, and harvesting by human hands in order to be brought to market successfully.

Unfortunately, recent data has shown that America's farm economy is in decline. Inflation, workforce challenges, elevated input costs, market access restrictions, onerous regulatory requirements, and a range of other problems continue to chip into our sustainability as an industry. Despite producing the healthiest, safest, and most efficient foods possible, more and more farmers and ranchers are forced out of business every year as these problems go unaddressed.

While we know the bulk of these challenges cannot be solved overnight, we do believe Congress is in an advantageous position to move forward on comprehensive agricultural workforce reforms. We feel this is particularly true given the significant investments in border security in recent years.

In January, our partners at the American Farm Bureau Federation sent a letter to lawmakers, asking for help on some of these workforce-related challenges. While we appreciate and support those measures, we feel it is critical to promote a comprehensive approach that sufficiently prioritizes our existing domestic workforce. Improving guestworker programs such as H-2A are important steps, but must be part of a larger push to address the full spectrum of workers here in the U.S.



For California Farm Bureau and our members, we believe such a legislative solution should consider the following provisions:

- Adopt a new agricultural workforce program. Stability and certainty for existing workers is critical, and Congress should promote a program that allows eligible, currently undocumented agricultural workers to earn legal presence and work authorization.
- Modernize and streamline guestworker programs. The current H-2A visa system was designed for a different era of agriculture, it must be modernized to function effectively and affordably for farmers and ranchers of all sizes, not just large-scale operations.
- Expand legal protections and accountability. Clear and consistent federal oversight is essential for both employers and employees. Congress should work to clean up the complicated regulatory burdens that add unnecessary costs further down the system.

Together, we believe these policies would provide much-needed support to strengthen our agricultural workforce and enhance the stability of our nation's food system. As we often say, food security *is* national security, and adopting these proposals would deliver meaningful support to an industry that plays a vital role in safeguarding America's food supply.

At California Farm Bureau, we're proud to stand alongside the people who keep American agriculture thriving. Their hard work and commitment are the reason we all enjoy a safe and dependable food supply. That's why we've long supported legislation that gives our workforce the stability and fairness they deserve, helping ensure they can continue building their lives, supporting their families, and strengthening the communities that rely on them.

Today, we respectfully ask for your leadership in advancing these critical issues—not only for the benefit of our farmers and workers—but for the rural and urban communities across the nation that rely on a strong and secure food system. We appreciate your consideration and stand ready to work with you to move these priorities forward.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon Douglass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shannon Douglass
President
California Farm Bureau