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## **Farmworker Justice opposes anti-immigrant amendments to Homeland Security Appropriations bill.**

Washington, DC – Farmworker Justice opposes amendments to the appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security (H.R. 240) that seek to prevent the Administration from implementing President Obama’s immigration executive actions, which are urgently needed to protect immigrant families, youth, and others.

“The DACA and DAPA programs are sensible efforts to address the broken immigration system that is harming immigrants, employers, and the nation. They are a modest step in the right direction and should not be obstructed,” said Bruce Goldstein, President of Farmworker Justice. Among agricultural workers, the people who labor in dangerous, low-paid jobs on our farms and ranches, a majority are undocumented. Many of these undocumented farmworkers live in fear of detection, job loss and deportation, and are vulnerable to abuse.

The President’s deferred action programs will allow eligible residents who lack authorized immigration status to come forward, submit to background checks and properly document themselves with the federal government and in their workplaces. Those undocumented immigrants who qualify will obtain a temporary relief from deportation and temporary work authorization. “With protection against the constant fear of deportation, farmworkers and other aspiring Americans will be able to contribute more fully to their communities and will be empowered in their workplaces,” said Goldstein.

The President’s actions are a proper exercise of his authority to enforce immigration laws.

“Congressional efforts to prevent the Administration from taking these modest steps should be rejected not only because the President possesses the authority, but also because the Administration’s efforts are sensible and humanitarian as well as economically beneficial to our nation and food system,” said Goldstein.

We commend President Obama’s action to address our broken immigration system. The President took action because Congress has refused to address the urgent need for comprehensive immigration reform. In 2013, the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill that included a carefully negotiated compromise regarding agricultural workers and employers. Unfortunately, the House failed to act. These proposed amendments move in the fundamentally wrong direction.

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*Farmworker Justice is a nonprofit litigation, advocacy and education organization that seeks to empower migrant and seasonal farmworkers to improve wages, working conditions, immigration policy, health, occupational safety*

*and access to justice.*