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Friday, Jan. 31 2014

**Contact**

Jessica Felix-Romero

[jromero@farmworkerjustice.org](mailto:jromero@farmworkerjustice.org)

202-800-2524

## **House Republican Immigration Principles Are a Step Forward, But Still Incomplete**

Washington, DC – The House Republicans' immigration reform principles are an encouraging step forward in the necessary process to address a broken immigration system. But they mistakenly neglect the importance of opening up a path for hard-working immigrant families already in this country to become full participants in their communities and our country through citizenship.

The best way to ensure a strong and stable work force for American agriculture is through legal protection on the job and in communities for the roughly one million undocumented farmworkers already here and on the job. Our country benefits when its workers and their families are fully engaged in civic life.

"We are encouraged that the House is taking a preliminary step to address the immigration crisis in our country; however, the House GOP's approach falls short of what is needed for 11 million people already living and working in our country," said Bruce Goldstein, President of Farmworker Justice. "Our country will be stronger if hard-working members of our society are covered by labor laws and able to fully participate in civic life as citizens."

Last year, the United Farm Workers and a coalition of agricultural employers negotiated for months, with the support of a bipartisan group of Senators, eventually reaching a tough-but-fair agricultural stakeholder immigration agreement. That compromise establishes a roadmap for undocumented farmworkers and their children to earn legal permanent residency and apply for citizenship if they meet a series of qualifications. Farmworker Justice urges the House and the President to consider the importance of that roadmap as they continue to address immigration reform.

"The men and women who labor under difficult and dangerous conditions to put food on our tables deserve a balanced and fair response to the immigration crisis in our country. We urge the House, Senate, and President Obama to continue working towards much-needed immigration reform," said Goldstein.

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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.*