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Farmworker Justice Statement on the American Health Care Act

Yesterday, the House passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA), a bill that repeals and replaces the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The AHCA would roll back the gains farmworkers and their families have made under the ACA. In addition to repealing the employer and individual mandates, the AHCA will eliminate protections for individuals' pre-existing conditions, reduce access to comprehensive health insurance and the ACA's essential health benefits, and end Medicaid expansion. It will also make health insurance less affordable for low-income individuals and families by restructuring the ACA's tax credits. Not only will tax credits be based on age instead of income, but eligibility for tax credits will be restricted to a narrow category of immigrants. Farmworkers in the U.S. on H-2A temporary work visas, who are currently able to enroll in health insurance at affordable rates under the ACA, will no longer qualify for tax credits.

Agricultural work is one of the most hazardous occupations in the U.S. Congress should act to address health disparities in farmworker communities instead of repealing their access to meaningful care. Farmworker Justice opposes the AHCA and any efforts to reduce access to health care for farmworkers and their families. Given the numerous barriers to health care, farmworkers need more options for health insurance coverage, not fewer.

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Farmworker Justice is a national advocacy organization for migrant and seasonal farmworkers with thirty years of experience on immigration and labor policy.