

Human Rights Agricultural Labor

HR-4

The Friends Committee on Legislation strongly affirms the value of all who work in food production. We recognize that of God in everyone; therefore, we feel compelled to single out the farm worker. We support legislation which seeks to give agricultural workers parity with other workers, while emphasizing that the unique circumstances of agricultural employment require special protection for farm workers.

Practices which degrade workers, such as low wages, unfair overtime, the use of child labor, exposure to toxic chemicals, or disregard of protective health measures, are unacceptable.

Therefore, we support legislation which provides protection for farm workers, whether citizens, immigrants, or here under special arrangements.

(1) the appointment of farm worker representation on the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, as well as the provision of adequate staff to enforce the Board's function in a vigorous manner;

(2) full support of democratic, non-violent farm worker union activity;

(3) protection of workers hired through labor contractors to assure that the workers are not isolated from protections they would have if working directly for growers;

(4) safe and humane working conditions including protection of farm workers and their families from hazards of the work place by eliminating avoidable hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, and by providing worker's compensation insurance coverage;

(5) workers' benefits including social security, employer paid medical insurance, unemployment insurance, and access to health care, which must include portability of benefits;

(6) availability of publicly and privately financed affordable housing that meets health and safety standards, including during times of involuntary unemployment;

(7) access to education that compensates for the family mobility that agricultural work often requires.

We oppose any actions which would diminish the rights California agricultural workers currently have under the law.

Approved by Southern Regional Committee 09/16/99.

Approved by Northern Regional Committee 01/29/00.