



October 12, 2022

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
United States Senate
127A Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Cornyn and Cruz,

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Ramiro A. Cavazos
President & CEO

As Texas business and agricultural leaders, we urge you to pass new Senate agriculture workforce solutions to address inflation, lower food prices, ensure grocery store shelves remain stocked, and enhance our national food security by protecting domestic agriculture production. Texas leads the nation in number of farms and ranches, with 248,416 farms and ranches covering 127 million acres.

The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth, development, and interests of more than five million Hispanic-owned businesses that, combined, contribute over \$800 billion to the American economy every year. We also serve as a platform for our nationwide network of over 260 local Hispanic chambers of commerce.

Without agricultural labor reforms, many producers in our state will have to make painful decisions to either cut production or exit the business entirely. That would be devastating for Texas and the nation. Texas is home to more than 6,000 family farms growing fruits and vegetables, valued at nearly \$1 billion in sales, and all of those farms rely on labor to harvest their crops.

The [USDA predicts](#) that next year, for the first time in U.S. history, we as a country will be importing more agricultural goods than we export. If we do not solve this labor shortage, that trend will continue, threatening our food independence.

Recently, Texas A&M International University released data from a new [economic study](#) on the link between stabilizing the agricultural workforce and decreasing inflation and consumer prices. The study shows that ensuring farmers have a stable, secure, reliable, and legal workforce is strongly related to keeping America's grocery shelves stocked, combating inflation, and lowering food prices (including milk, eggs, meat, and produce) for all domestic consumers.

Texas's farms need harvesting and our cows need milking. We need a stable workforce to get it done, and the safety of our nation's food supply hinges on it. In 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Farm Workforce Modernization Act with bipartisan support. That was a good start, and now in the Senate, Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Mike Bennet (D-CO) have taken the lead on negotiating improvements on the House's solutions and moving the process forward. We are encouraged by their leadership, and we urge you to participate in this effort and be part of the solution to the labor shortages facing the Texas agriculture sector and sustaining our state's economy as a whole.

Thank you for your service and partnership in supporting our small and minority owned businesses across the country. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. We commend you for your leadership and look forward to a positive outcome on this important legislative matter.

Respectfully,

Ramiro A. Cavazos
President & CEO
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce