



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503**

March 18, 2021
(House Floor)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1603 – Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021

(Rep. Lofgren, D-CA, and 23 cosponsors)

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 1603, the Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2021. This legislation would provide farmworkers who are invaluable to our economy and have lived in this country for years - in some cases for decades - an opportunity to earn citizenship.

A path to immigration status for undocumented farmworkers is critically important to our Nation's food and agriculture sectors. A majority of the Nation's roughly 2.4 million farmworkers are undocumented, living in the shadows, and vulnerable to exploitation, including human trafficking. During the pandemic, these workers have risked their lives, harvesting fruits and vegetables and raising and caring for livestock to bring food to our tables.

With legal status and a path to citizenship, farmworkers would be able to earn higher wages and exercise their rights under our labor laws to demand better working conditions. In turn, businesses that rely on farmworkers would have a more reliable and stable workforce.

The Administration recognizes the need to improve the H-2A program. As this legislation moves forward, the Administration urges the Congress to strike a balance between the proposed expansion of the H-2A visa program and increased protections for farm workers to prevent abuse, which has marked the existing program.

The Administration also urges the Congress to reform other aspects of our immigration system by passing the U.S. Citizenship Act, which would provide a path to citizenship to millions of undocumented immigrants, establish a new system to responsibly manage and secure our border, bring long overdue visa reforms to keep families together and grow our economy, and address the root causes of instability and unsafe conditions causing migration from Central America.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to create an earned pathway to citizenship for farmworkers.

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