



June 8, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom  
California State Capitol  
1303 10<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Expansion of California's Universal Basic Income Pilot to Include Farmworkers and Supplemental Guaranteed Income for Reduced Hours**

Dear Governor Newsom,

We, the undersigned members of the California State Legislature, strongly urge your Administration to expand access to California's Universal Basic Income Pilot Program to include farmworkers who have been displaced by drought, and as Supplemental Guaranteed Income, to farmworkers who have had their hours significantly reduced due to drought.

While many Californians were able to shelter in place at home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, farmworkers worked to maintain our food supply chain and ensured there was food to eat. Farmworkers had the highest rates of COVID-19 infections and faced major inequities surrounding the support and care they received.

As the drought continues to worsen, farmers will have to make tough decisions to either fallow their land and/or plant less. In some places, they already have. The drought will increase costs of farming, as farmers grapple with overtime pay, the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and begin to plan for the sustainable groundwater management act requirements. The increased costs of farming compounded by the costs a drought will impose significant increases in the

price of food and produce, making it harder for vulnerable populations--including farmworkers--to feed their families.

As drought reduces the amount of land farmers need to be worked, the heat will reduce the time farmworkers are allowed to work with a six hour maximum on days 100 degrees or hotter. If farmworkers do get to work the maximum time allowed before overtime pay kicks in, at \$14.25 an hour for 8.5 hours a day, farmworkers are only bringing home \$2500 a month. With only six days of 100 degrees in a month, this comes down to \$2200.

Allowing drought-displaced farmworkers or farmworkers who have had their hours reduced to participate in the Universal Basic Income Pilot program will help them continue their recovery from COVID-19, without suffering additional catastrophic loss due to drought.

California has the revenue and compassion to extend this pilot program to farmworkers. Implementation and administration of the \$35,000,000 that has been earmarked for the California Universal Basic Income Pilot Program and could easily make eligible displaced or unemployed farmworkers who are not working due to the drought.

We collectively support adding displaced, underemployed, or unemployed farmworkers due to drought to the eligibility list. Providing support to these essential farmworkers will benefit local communities, our state economy and help soften the blow of the impending drought.

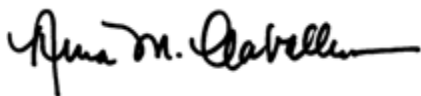
Sincerely,



Melissa Hurtado  
Senator, District 14



Buffy Wicks  
Assemblymember, District 15



Anna Caballero  
Senator, District 12



Robert Rivas  
Assemblymember, District 30



Monique Limón  
Senator, District 19



Rudy Salas  
Assemblymember, District 32



Steve Bennett  
Assemblymember, District 37