

AMERICAS

MAJORITY

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May 11, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

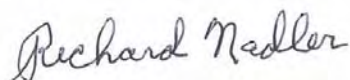
I would like to commend you on the AgJobs Act of 2009, a piece of legislation crucial to maintaining America's position in an increasingly internationalized market in vegetables, fruits, and grains. The bill is a paradigm of what immigration reform should be – friendly alike to families and businesses, but mindful of the needs of public safety.

It is well known to those who represent agricultural constituents that foreign migrant workers are crucial to American farmers, ranchers, and foresters. What is less understood is the vast network of white collar jobs that depend on maintaining access to guest workers *in America*. Roughly one half of the agricultural labor force consists of those who work with crops in field, nurseries, and greenhouses. The rest, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics NAICS codes reveal, represent a cross section of American skills: Managers in production, finance, transportation, and sales; computer programmers and systems analysts; accountants and auditors; life scientists and agricultural engineers; pilots and truck drivers, riggers and diesel mechanics; salesmen, secretaries and receptionists -- an entire world of white collar jobs *on American soil*, much of it dependent on the competitive nature of our operations in the fields, nurseries, and greenhouses.

It has become fashionable in some circles to pretend that the exclusion of foreign workers from America's farms will relieve American farmers of their competition. This is not so. It is possible, had one the heart for it, to remove Mexican nationals from American fields – but we cannot remove Argentinians from Argentina, Brazilians from Brazil, or Malaysians from Malaysia. A healthy agricultural industry requires access to all types of labor, including field labor, on a competitive basis, *here in America*.

We hope you will succeed in moving AgJobs 2009 to keep American agriculture competitive.

Best,



Richard Nadler
President