

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Government Affairs

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports the "Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act of 2009" (AgJOBS), which is expected to be introduced today.

The Chamber supports a comprehensive solution to fixing America's broken immigration system and believes that AgJOBS is a step towards that goal and one that can be taken now. One of the bill's most important attributes is that it provides a reasonable mechanism for the most experienced, but unauthorized agricultural workers to earn legal status subject to strict conditions.

Agriculture is a sector that is highly sensitive to foreign competition. Forcing much of U.S. agricultural production offshore through an enforcement-only approach to immigration policy is resulting in significant loss of American jobs and leaving the United States less secure. The U.S. agriculture sector is the most reliant on the foreign-born labor supply. However, each farmworker sustains jobs in the upstream and downstream economy—equipment, supplies and services, packaging and distribution, lending and insurance.

The bipartisan AgJOBS is the fruit of years of hard work by business and labor, conservatives and liberals, Republicans and Democrats alike. The Chamber urges your support for enactment of AgJOBS, this year.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten