Report on Immigration for the Larimer County Board of Commissioners
Submitted by the Agricultural Advisory Board
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Overview

- Economic impact of immigration for agriculture and other sectors
- Types of visas or documents used by immigrant workers
- Local law enforcement regarding immigrant workers
- Immigrant workers and their families
- Existing legislation, executive orders, and ongoing legislative efforts
- Other groups working on immigration issues
- International perspective

(Thus far, we have presented this to our Larimer County Commissioners and Larimer County Sheriff)
Immigrant Workers and the Economic Impact of Agriculture in Colorado

- CO Agriculture sector: $40 billion in production and 173,000 jobs
- 36% of Colorado farmworkers are undocumented and 32% of all undocumented workers in Colorado work in ag
- Dairy, horticulture, livestock producers and food processors rely heavily on immigrant workers
- These workers bring a strong work ethic and learn skills quickly
- Ag lacks workers, currently affecting production here. Losing more immigrant labor could cost CO more than $100 million.
- In Colorado, undocumented workers pay over $311 million in taxes and receive few benefits (2016 study)
Other economic sectors are reliant/dependent on unauthorized immigrant workers across the U.S.
Sampler: Recent Headlines Across the Country

• *Georgia's Harsh Immigration Law Costs Millions in Unharvested Crops* *(Atlantic Monthly)*
• *US Farmers Depend on Illegal Immigrants* *(VOA news)*
• *Undocumented workers do the jobs Americans don't want*
• *Vermont Fights for Immigrant Dairy Workers* *(NPR News)*
• *Without Immigrant Labor, the Economy Would Crumble*
• *Idaho dairy owners bringing immigrant labor plight to GOP lawmakers* *(Miami Herald)*
Documentation Issues

• Forged documents: SS cards and Green Cards are readily available for purchase on the black market
• H-2 A Visas (temporary or seasonal workers) and Green Cards (permanent resident) are difficult to obtain.
• H-2 A program only supplies 3% of needed labor
• Legal drivers licenses (better safety & insurance, but harder to get & appts. sold on black market)
• Legal immigration system is not working: huge backlogs, wait times, costs, administrative burden, exploitation results in illegal entry and utilization of unauthorized workers
• System can’t provide workers needed during peak or high yield periods
• Favors U.S. citizens (seldom available, willing, qualified)
• Immigration/documentation system has not been updated in 27 years
Law Enforcement: Detention and Deportation

- Immigrant workers needed while immigration reform is addressed
- Current atmosphere of fear and distrust de-stabilizes workforce, families, public safety
- Jails and LE information have served as a conduit for ICE deportations
- Replacement workers can place more strain on communities than traditional immigrant workers
- AAB asks Law Enforcement to focus on public safety and human rights
- New pressure for agreements or 287(g)collaboration with ICE could increase adverse impacts on agriculture
Immigrant Workers and their Families

• Larimer County - > 4000 undocumented residents w > 3000 in workforce & 93% above poverty threshold *
• 63% came before 1999 and have citizen children
• Unauthorized workers are not eligible for majority of public assistance programs despite paying taxes**
• Deportation of breadwinners creates burden on social services who must serve family members w/ citizenship
• (1998-2012 nationally, 660,000 families many diagnosed w PTSD from separation)***
• Needed workforce is increasingly de-stabilized, lacks trust, is less productive and lives in shadows of our community
• Most live in towns rather than in on-farm housing (+ econ. impact)

*Center for Migration Studies, 2016
** not even eligible for 5 years after obtaining citizenship
*** Human Impact Partners
A History of Immigration Legislation: Existing and Proposed Legislation, Executive Orders

- Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act of 1983
- Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
- Obama Executive Order: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) 2012 no lawful status or path -citizenship
- Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Permanent Residents (DAPA) blocked by injunction, 2015
- President Trump’s Executive Order - Jan. 25th, 2017
- Senator Bennet’s Blue Card (being introduced)
Summary of Executive Order, Jan 25th, 2017

- 5000 new immigration enforcement and 10,000 Border Patrol positions
- Increase in # of detention facilities
- Continuous detention in place of “catch and release”
- Withhold $ from sanctuary jurisdictions*
- Broadening of definition of criminal activity
- Increase requests for local collaboration with ICE, 287(g) deputization and training
- Publicizing crimes committed by unauthorized residents
- Removal of federal privacy protection

* Sanctuary Jurisdictions: According to tracking by the Center for Immigration Studies, a think tank that advocates for restricting immigration and opposes sanctuary policies, roughly 300 sanctuary jurisdictions rejected more than 17,000 detention requests, between January 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015.
National Events Since Our Presentations to County Officials

- Stepped up detentions and deportations, increased fear and apprehension among ag and other workers
- Contracts with private detention centers
- Threats to sanctuary jurisdictions
- States where legislation is being introduced to force full cooperation with ICE
- Many recent articles regarding non-criminal deportations
Local and National Support for Immigration Reform

- Farm Bureau, Farmers Union, Colorado Livestock Assn., Agricultural Workforce Coalition
- Coloradans for Immigration Reform
- Partnership for a New American Economy
- Fuerza Latina and This is Our Home Coalition (Ft. Collins)
- El Centro (CSU), “Asset student” advocates
- Larimer County Ag Advisory Board
- Senator Michael Bennet’s Office
Summary: We Asked that Local Decision Makers Consider the Following:

- We need a stable agricultural workforce
- Legal immigration system broken and in dire need of reform
- Tremendous economic and human costs associated with deportation
- Deportation is unrealistic, prohibitively expensive
- Most deportations originate as administrative apprehensions by local law enforcement
- Local law enforcement should focus on public safety, human rights, and limit contact with agencies focused on deportation
- Limited county services available to undocumented residents help stabilize and should be continued
Excerpt from Colorado Compact

• “We support a law enforcement strategy that focuses on public safety, targets serious crime, and safeguards victims and witnesses. We further urge a reasonable and predictable regulatory environment that considers the interests of, and unintended consequences to, businesses, workers, and consumers. Furthermore, the broader reform effort should eventually include a way to accurately, reliably, and affordably determine who is permitted to work, ensuring an adequate labor force for a growing economy”.

![Image of two people looking at cattle]
Retaining Employees

• Provide a good salary
  – Bonuses, rewards
  – Health insurance
  – Paid vacation
  – Work Clothes
  – Take homes? Veggies, meat, cheese
• *Provide a safe workplace and functional equipment
• Define the job.
  – Written job description
  – Treat with respect.
Immigrant Labor Abroad

- Farmers say they need more migrant workers to pick crops - because Britons do not have the "work ethic" to do it. (BBC)
- Migration from Punjab to Italy in the Dairy Sector: The Quiet Indian Revolution
- Spain (Africa, France-Basque workers)
- New Zealand (Philippino workers)
- Saudi Arabia (Indonesian workers)
Thank you
Gracias

Questions welcome
Preguntas apreciadas
Legislation, Executive Orders, cont.

- **Trump Administration Executive Order of Jan. 25th, 2017 Key Points:** Requires adding 5,000 immigration enforcement positions to a “Deportation Force”; adding 10000 Border Patrol agents; increased detention facilities; continuous detention rather than “catch and release”; withholding federal money from “Sanctuary Jurisdictions” *(> 300 existing)*; a broadening of what constitutes an illegal/criminal activity that = deportation priority; reinstatement of “Secure Communities” program which asks for increased local collaboration to identify unauthorized residents; forcing more international cooperation; and publicizing crimes committed by illegal residents.(CNN Summary, January 26th). It also removes federal privacy protection from immigrant records making identification and deportation easier (Washington Post, January 28th).

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