

AGRICULTURAL MIGRANT WORKER VISA POSITION

April 2012

The League of Women Voters Grand Traverse Area supports the agricultural sector in its efforts to meet the challenges of hiring an adequate number of skilled agricultural workers.

The League supports:

I. Education

- A. Educate the community on agricultural employment issues including but not limited to: the lack of local motivated skilled workers; the expense of hiring and transporting workers from other areas; extensive paperwork and regulations; local prejudices; language barriers; and legal issues.
- B. Use all forms of media, workshops and community outreach to inform others of agricultural employment issues.

II. Services

- A. Learn about, support and promote social services for agricultural workers including but not limited to: healthcare, housing, childcare, education and legal assistance.
- B. Learn about, support and promote services for agricultural employers including but not limited to: the application process, documentation verification and legal issues.

III. Training: Explore successful agricultural worker apprentice and training programs.

IV. Legal Issues

- A. Discuss with law enforcement agencies the concerns of agricultural employers and workers regarding local enforcement of federal immigration laws.
- B. Support the dissemination of information to agricultural workers regarding their legal rights.

V. Legislation

- A. Support legislation that addresses the needs of agricultural employers and workers including, but not limited to:
 - (1) the creation of a single government office to be in charge of dealing with agricultural employment issues;
 - (2) a reduction in time and the elimination of unnecessary red tape in the guest agricultural worker application process;
 - (3) an increase in the number of agricultural workers allowed to enter the United States;
 - (4) the ability of agricultural workers to work for more than one agricultural employer;
 - (5) the renewal of visas and related documents locally by agricultural workers;
 - (6) the ability of agricultural workers to enter the United States and to return to their home country without jeopardizing their work status;
 - (7) the promotion of agricultural worker safety;
 - (8) the creation of tamper proof documents for agricultural workers;
 - (9) the establishment of a structured path to legal status for current undocumented and future guest agricultural workers.
- B. Encourage agricultural employers to become more involved in influencing legislation that affects them and their workers.

VI. Collaboration: work in coalition with other organizations with similar goals.