

STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. BOX 942849  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0023  
(916) 319-2023  
FAX (916) 319-2123

# Assembly California Legislature

DISTRICT OFFICE  
6245 N. FRESNO STREET #108  
FRESNO, CA 93710  
(559) 446-2029  
FAX (559) 446-2028



**JIM PATTERSON**  
ASSEMBLYMAN, TWENTY-THIRD DISTRICT

October 7, 2013

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

We are writing to express our full support for the over 2,600 farm workers in the Central Valley who are currently being deprived of the right to vote on the ratification of a proposed contract with the United Farm Workers of America (UFW). On October 2, 2013, five-hundred of these workers took a day off from work to march through Sacramento in an effort to make their voices heard to decertify a union that abandoned them more than twenty years ago.

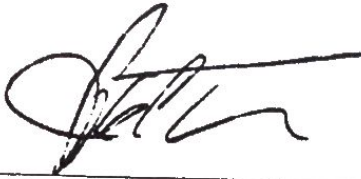
In 1990, the UFW won an election to organize the workers of Gerawan Farming with a total vote count of 536 votes and was certified as the employees' exclusive bargaining representative by the Agriculture Labor Relations Board (ALRB) in 1992; however, the union ultimately never procured a contract and disappeared. During the 20-year absence, the union did not communicate with their representatives, they did not file any grievances, nor did the union negotiate any terms or conditions of the workplace. Now over two decades later, the UFW petitioned the ALRB to force Gerawan Farming into binding arbitration to impose a contract that would require that employees pay 3% of their wages in dues. Notably, less than 10% of the current Gerawan Farming workforce were employees in 1990, thus almost the entire current workforce will not have had a chance to elect their representative and will be unable to ratify the contract the ALRB will be imposing on the employer soon.

As you know, Governor, the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act was landmark legislation signed by you in 1975. Its implementation led to the creation of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board whose function, according to ALRB, is to "ensure peace in the fields of California by guaranteeing justice for all agricultural workers and stability in agricultural labor relations."

In that spirit, we urge you to ensure that the rights of these workers are protected. Without your intervention, union membership and its financial obligations will be imposed on these workers regardless of whether they choose it or not. The ALRB has recently rejected a petition for decertification by farm workers at Gerawan Farming seeking an election to hold such a vote. We understand that only 1,300 signatures were needed for the petition; however the petition organizers collected and turned in 2,250 signatures, yet the petition was dismissed for a lack of showing of interest.

We respectfully request that you review the ruling by the ALRB Regional Director issued on September 25, 2013, and ultimately ensure that justice and the right to vote for these hardworking employees occurs. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

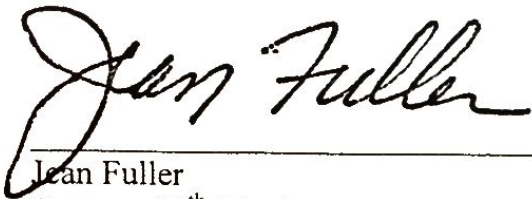
Sincerely,




Jim Patterson  
Assemblymember, 23<sup>rd</sup> District



Shannon Grove  
Assemblymember, 34<sup>th</sup> District



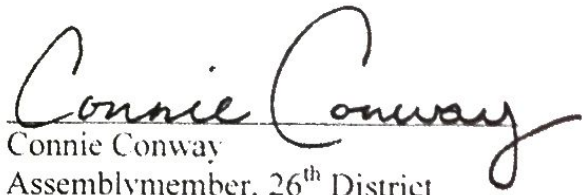
Jean Fuller  
Senator, 18<sup>th</sup> District



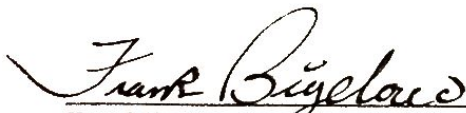
Tom Berryhill  
Senator, 14<sup>th</sup> District



Kristin Olsen  
Assemblymember, 12<sup>th</sup> District



Connie Conway  
Assemblymember, 26<sup>th</sup> District



Franklin Bigelow  
Assemblymember, 5<sup>th</sup> District