



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

June 13, 2022

Office of the Principal Legal Advisor
JFK Federal Building
15 New Sudbury Street, Room 425
Boston, MA 02203

Re: Support for Prosecutorial Discretion request for members of Migrant Justice

Dear Chief Counsel:

I am writing in support of a request for the exercise of prosecutorial discretion for Vermont residents. Based on the DHS memorandum issued by Secretary Mayorkas on September 30th, 2021, Guidelines for the Enforcement of Civil Immigration Law, Vermont residents who are candidates for the favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion should not be removed from the United States.

Agricultural workers are valued community members in Vermont. Their work helps sustain the farms that are central to our state's economy and rural character. During the pandemic, they have been the essential workers who have kept our grocery shelves stocked and our families fed. Vermont is experiencing significant labor shortages in this sector and these individuals are vital to our community and to providing a robust local food system.

Agricultural workers, who are members of Vermont-based community organization Migrant Justice, have strong and well-documented histories exercising their workplace and tenant rights. This factor is contemplated in Section IV of the DHS Enforcement Memo, which includes the provision: "*A noncitizen's exercise of work place or tenant rights, or service as a witness in a labor or housing dispute, should be considered a mitigating factor in the exercise of prosecutorial discretion.*"

As a statewide elected official, I join with others in respectfully requesting your consideration of a favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion for eligible Vermont residents so that they may remain with their community in Vermont. If you have any questions, please contact my Chief of Staff Andrew Gillespie at: andrew.gillespie@vermont.gov.

Sincerely,

Molly Gray

Vermont Lieutenant Governor