

March 31, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

My name is Francisco. I have worked in Woodburn, Oregon for the last 25 years in the strawberry, blueberry, squash, cherry, broccoli and grape fields. On July 2006, two of my brothers, my brother-in-law and 5 cousins were lost in the desert of Arizona. I have spent the last 3 years looking for them; all of them were farm workers in the state of Oregon. Living without knowing what happened to my family torments me everyday. At least in death, my family and I can give them a Christian burial. Not knowing what happened to them is worse than death. Although I am documented, we must work to fix the immigration system so that this doesn't happen to other families.

Sincerely,

Francisco Elena Rios

Francisco Elena

March 31, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

My name is Lorena. I am a 31-year-old farmworker from Woodburn, Oregon. I am a mother of two children and have worked in strawberry, cucumber and grape fields for the past 15 years. While my children are all US Citizens, I remain undocumented. Every day I work hard to pick fruits and vegetable to provide food for this nation. Every day before I go to work I kiss my children. I think about my children all day long, worrying that I might not see them anymore because I might be arrested by ICE. The only error I committed was to want to work. The majority of my co-workers share the same situation as me. We support a bill for legalization that can help us stay with our families and allow us to work without the fear of being deported. Please support AgJOBS.

Sincerely,



Lorena Martinez
Woodburn, Oregon

March 27, 2010

Gerardo Pineda
Elba, New York

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

My name is Gerardo Pineda. I am from Morelos, Mexico. The first time I came here to the states was in 1997. I came alone and stayed for 6 months. My family remained in Mexico and so I left the states quickly. In Mexico there is very little work and if there is work is very poorly paid. Its barely enough for food, not enough to get clothes, much less for household furnishings and studies for the children.

In 2004, I returned with my wife to help our family progress in life. We owed much money in Mexico because we never had enough to buy clothes and necessities for the family. We came here to pay our debt. My kids stayed with my parents. After two years we brought them with us.

The first time the children tried to come through the desert. They walked two days and two nights. At the end they did not have enough water or food and had to surrender to immigration to survive. They were 7, 12 and 14 years old. I had arranged the "coyote" person to transport them from here (U.S.) by phone. We could not sleep until they arrived.

We now live in Elba, NY. It is very difficult for us to move to another place. So we stayed here. At first we worked in the fields planting and harvesting onions, cabbage, cucumber, and pumpkin. Its a very hard job, first because of the sun and also because you have to squat down all the time and carry heavy boxes. Sometimes we get paid per hour (\$ 5.15) and sometimes by contract. The shorter fields paid \$ 5 and the longer up to \$ 12 per field.

Now my wife and I work in the warehouse packing only cabbage, squash, cucumber and potato washing and cleaning onions. It is a little less heavy work.

Now life is better for my family. My children can study and eat and dress better, although we cannot leave the house for fear of immigration and the police who are checking the cars. For example, today we will not leave our home because we see many police and immigration patrolling the roads. So we wait until its calmer, maybe tomorrow or after tomorrow.

It's a very uneasy life for us because of the pressure of the police and the immigration authorities. We also fear that one-day my wife and I walk out and the police or immigration may take us and the children are left here alone.

There is also a lot of injustice for us immigrants. Two years ago my brother and I were buying things for our family in Mexico. My brother came out with our gifts and immigration took our things. We lost everything. A year ago was the same with another of my brothers at the border. Here the police arrest a person because they look Mexican and calls immigration to check. Also many of our friends and acquaintances have had the police and immigration enter their houses and they have taken the fathers leaving the mothers and the children alone. It is very difficult for families and for the mothers to support the families financially because there are seasons when there is few work for women. It is difficult!

Mr. President, please help us obtain an immigration reform because we cannot continue living in fear forever. We always work hard for this country and pay our taxes. We are not criminals or terrorists. We are workers who want to take care of their families. Please help!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gerardo Pineda", written over a horizontal line.

Gerardo Pineda

March 31, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President Obama,

It is my pleasure to greet you. I am Maria Cervantes, I have 10 years in this country. I left my land because I had all my children in school and I could not give them clothes and sometimes not even food to eat, even less give them material things. I had them all in school but it was very hard in my country, that's why I crossed over to this country and here I am.

No matter how poor I am I have the dream of going to my home land but I can not go because if I go I won't be able to cross back. I left my homeland in the year 2000, suffering because I cannot see my parents who are very old in age and a son who is also in Mexico. Since I got here I have been working very hard, I work in the grape industry with the company Giumarra for 10 years. I work hard and under many abuses and humiliations from the boss because I have no papers. Also I want to let you know about all my suffering to get through to this country, it took me a month to get here. I passed thru Naco Sonora.

Now Mr. President I would like to know if there is hope for us to get our papers or not? That is my question Mr. President Obama.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Cervantes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Maria Cervantes
Terra Bella, CA

March 31, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Through this letter I send to greet you Mr. President, I hope you are well in the company of your family and after my brief greeting I will say the following:

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America- My name is Doroteo Jimenez and I live with my family in Lodi, CA. I have been working for 20 years doing every type of work related to the fields.

During all these years there has always been mistreatment, abuse, bullying, as if we were implements, and not human beings. I am going to talk to you a little about the story of my niece Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez. She started working on the 12th of May 2008 in the West Coast Farming company through the contractor Merced Labor Farms, in Farmington, near the east of Stockton, CA. Pruning the vines and sprouts of these plants, on Wednesday 14th of May around three in the afternoon Maria fainted at work from the lack of water and from over a hundred degrees of heat. The foreman said it was only a faint, in mockery he said, this happens to all women. All this happen while the foreman and two supervisors were present at the time that she suffered her faint. Nobody did anything to take her to any hospital or at least they should have called 911, when our ride-guy saw that she was gravely ill he took her to a clinic, but when they got to the clinic they did not want to attend to her. The same clinic called an ambulance to take her to Lodi Memorial Hospital where she was hospitalized past five in the afternoon on the fourteenth day of May, she arrived in a state of coma and unfortunately on May 16 around 10:00am we lost her. She was a young woman that did not need to suffer like she did, who had a lifetime ahead of her, and as if it were not enough I was fired from work for talking about my niece.

Mr. President I want to share this pain with you because I know you will understand because you're a good father, and nobody wants to lose a family member like this.

Let us demand change in the field on behalf of Maria Isabel Vasquez Jimenez and all workers who have lost their lives, we must do justice to them and have respect for ourselves and future generations that will come to do these jobs.

With all due respect, Mr. President, I ask that you approve "Immigration Reform" to all who are working for a better future, mainly farm workers and students. No more injustice, no more loss of lives in the fields, we are farm workers but when we lose a loved one we also cry.

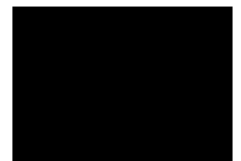
With all the respect you deserve, Mr. President, I hope you understand my simple words and I apologize for my bad writing and I hope you take into consideration my request.

Thank you very much for reading my letter I was very fortunate.

Respectfully

Doroteo Jimenez

Note: I'm sending you a picture of my niece and I hope that you can sign it. I want to send you a strong hug. Thank you.



March 31, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Barack Obama,

I first arrived to the United States in 1979 with the hope of working very hard in order to send money to my parents to help them provide for my 7 siblings. I also wanted to save a little bit of money so I could one day purchase my own property.

The first attempt I made to enter was through the desert of Sonorita, undocumented. I had to walk for one night and half a day in order to get to a place where we would be picked up by a car. We got lost in the desert but continued walking in order to reach our destination.

We were later detained by immigration officials and I was detained for 45 days in a juvenile prison because they were investigating someone with whom we were traveling. The reality for the thousands of people like me who risk their lives to cross the border is that there always exist the risk of being assaulted, raped and even the loss of life as every year hundreds of people become victims.

I was a farm worker working in mushrooms in the state of Pennsylvania for 14 years. Working in mushrooms is not easy; it requires a lot of skill and physical effort in order to be able to earn a stable salary. It requires long hours working inside of small houses and structures where mushrooms are cultivated. The manual labor required by this work is done mainly by workers without legal documents, who because of the fear of being fired will not complain about the abuses they face at the hands of their supervisors. They also do not report the accidents they suffer on the job due to the bad working conditions or report when they develop illnesses for which nobody knows the cause of.

We are human beings and we work to survive, to support our families and to put food on the tables of everyone.

For us it is important that immigration reform is passed, so that that the millions of workers can come out of the shadows so that they can fight to obtain what they deserve and to contribute their part to this country.

Mr. President, please give us the opportunity to come out of the shadows.

Sincerely,
Manuel Guzman
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Teresa A. Serrano

Dear President Obama,

With warmest regards and respect please receive greetings of my part and of my family for you and your family, and after greeting you I would like to tell you the following.

Mr. President, I am Teresa Amezcua Serrano. I arrived to this country in 1967 with my parents and 6 siblings. I have worked in the fields as a farm worker for more than 40 years. Mr. President, I want to share with you what the day of a farm worker looks like. Many times the government ignores us and the work that farm workers do is not valued. It is very hard work and very important because we put the food on the table of the people of this country and of other countries.

Mr. President the day of a farm worker begins very early and finishes very late, as early as 4:30 in the morning and ends around 10:30 at night.

Mr. President, when my 2 older daughters were small my husband and I had to work very long days because the salary was very little, sometimes I would get out of work very late from the fields that when I arrived to pick up my daughters they were already asleep. My sister that took care of my daughters would tell me to no longer take them "you better leave me clean clothes for tomorrow to send them to the school" and that day I wouldn't see them until the next day. Other times I would leave the fields a little early and was able to pick them up and take them home. At night when it was time to go to sleep my daughters would asked me for their father and I would have to tell them that he would come home late that night, then the youngest of my daughters would go where I had daddy's clothes and his overall ready and would kissed them and would say "daddy tomorrow I do want to see you." My husband worked as a tractor driver.

Mr. President these situations were very hard and difficult for us that we have legal documents. I think and I ask you to think how difficult it is for the people that do not have legal documents, they are at a worse situation. Moreover these people live with the fear that they can be deported and leave their children alone, they cannot work or live at peace because of the fear of not having their documents.

I ask for an opportunity for all these people that need the help and that contribute so much to this country. I have confidence in you that you will be able to understand the need of all these people.

Mr. President, I had the luck to arrive legally to this country because my father came as a Bracero and was able to get his residence and later legalize the rest of our family, my mother and all children. I am already a U.S. citizen and I feel very proud and grateful to this country. And with the United Farm Workers (UFW) founded by our great leader Cesar E. Chavez. Because we were able to begin to work in companies that have contracts with the UFW our salaries have

improved and we have medical insurance and other good benefits, because of this opportunity we have been able to give our 2 oldest daughters their education. Eloisa graduated as a clothing designer and Sandra graduated as an architect, they both work in industries they like and we feel very proud of them. Now we only have our youngest daughter, Yessica of 16 years of age, we hope to be able to give her a career of study as well.

Mr. President I have confidence in you and your government that you'll make the difference in this country. We are here to support you and to work along with you to do whatever is necessary to improve the living conditions of all. Mr. President I give you thanks for your attention in reading my letter.

Sincerely with warmest regards,
Teresa A. Serrano 3-31-10

March 31, 2010

Dear President Obama

My name is Angelica Ramirez. I'm fourteen years old, from Toluca Mexico. My father Miguel left Mexico to give my family a better life. He worked in the strawberry fields of Oregon, the onion fields of Idaho, picked raspberries in Florida, and planted trees in Arkansas. For ten years, he returned to Mexico every eight months to see us and would return to the U.S. to work.

In 1999, he came here with my mother, leaving all five of us, his children behind, with my grandmother. My mother returned immediately to Mexico, but my father stayed behind to find a job and find us a home. Two years later, in 2002, my mother returned to the U.S., leaving us behind. In 2003, my father returned for my brother, Hector, who at the time was eleven years old, and for me, at six years old.

We walked with my father in the desert; my brother carried two jugs of water and a bag of food. We walked the entire ten hours, fifty miles until we reach Arizona, where my father's car waited us. We saw rattlesnake, coyotes and cactus on the way. That same year, my father returned to Mexico for the rest of my siblings which included my four year old sister Victoria. She would cry every time my father put her down to walk. In fear of being heard by immigration agents, my father carried her for the entire journey. My sister Veronica, six years old and my brother Miguel, eight years old followed. He carried the two gallons of water and the food, while my father carried my sister.

When they finally reached my father's car in Arizona, he told me that they sang from happiness of making it safely from the journey through the desert. They arrived in Greenfield, California, where they were reunited with my brother Hector, my mother Victoria De Jesus and me.

President Obama, did you receive the handwoven bag, made by my mother, for you, that we asked Congressman Gutierrez to deliver to you?

My father feeds the entire world by putting vegetables and fruit on their tables. I live in fear that one day I'll return from school and he won't be here to feed me and my family.

Please, President Obama, when you see that bag, made from my mother's hardworking hands, don't forget the sons and daughters of farm workers as you lead our fight in immigration reform.

Will you do everything you can to help us?

Sincerely
Angelica Ramirez
Angelica Ramirez
Greenfield, California