

Migrant Justice



Here's what Vermont's farmworkers are saying about S-238:

"Now I feel like a prisoner. With an ID and license I wouldn't because I could come and go as I need."

"It would be great to be able to identify ourselves whether it be to cash checks or go to the store to buy my own food without waiting for my employer to do so when he can."

Why Support S-238?

1) Encourages Public Safety for all

Police can identify and verify residents identity when need be, and residents can feel comfortable and safe accessing police services especially as victims or witnesses to crimes. State IDs and licenses build upon the good work done for Bias-Free Policing in VT helping Police build trusting relationship with all our community members. During stops or investigations, police can identify drivers and passengers (if they need to) without having to examine foreign documents or have some folks with no ID at all. Many migrant workers, who have been victims or witnesses to crime, fear calling 911. S-238 makes us all safer.

Some migrant workers are already driving, either as part of their jobs or out of the fundamental need for transportation in a rural state. Let's create a path where workers take a test, understand the rules of the road, and buy insurance so that the roads are safer for everyone.

2) Provides direct support and relief for our hard-working family farmers

Here's what farmers are saying about S-238:

"Everyone needs to feel appreciated. I am here to show, not only to our employees, but to all the other migrant farm workers in Vermont that they deserve to be recognized for their contribution to VT agriculture."

Farmers are already mechanics, vets, tractor drivers, business people, and some are working two jobs. Asking them to be a taxi service for farm workers is just not good for farmers or workers. Even the most well-intentioned farmers can't meet all the needs of workers to get off the farm. Vermont can provide relief by granting access to driver's licenses for our migrant workers.

Many farmers also say that access to licenses would also increase the number of responsibilities workers can take on, making jobs more productive and satisfying.

3) S-238 Addresses Human and Workers' Rights issues

Most of our farmers do their best to be good employers. But there are severe cases of abuse on a minority of farms where workers find themselves stuck without any power to leave. There are also cases of women farmworkers who need to get out of an abusive relationship but can't move freely. S-238 helps any farmworker who find themselves in abusive situations have the power to move freely and independently. If you support Human and Workers Rights please support S-238.

Imagine living in rural Vermont without a car, and paying sometimes up to \$100 dollars for rides just to buy groceries--this is the current reality. For all those who supported the new VT Human Trafficking law S-238 is a good counterpart. Drivers' Licenses will reduce the black market of human trafficking. **Vermont can provide relief if S-238 gives migrant workers a path to drivers' licenses.**

4) Vermont's state economy will benefit

Once farm workers can drive, they will spend more money locally, buy vehicles and car insurance, open bank accounts and have greater interaction with the community at large.

***A NOTE ON REAL ID**

THE REAL ID Act is a law signed by President Bush in May 2005, which, IF it is accepted by and carried out by the states, would turn state driver's licenses into a genuine national identity card and impose numerous new burdens on taxpayers, citizens, immigrants, and state governments. *However*, the deadline for the REAL ID Act implementation has been postponed year after year, and Senator Leahy opposes it, citing concerns over costs, feasibility, privacy issues, and identity theft. To date, 25 states have enacted anti-Real ID bills or resolutions, and at least 15 will never issue a Real ID license because they have enacted binding legislation prohibiting participation in the program. *Futhermore, S-238 does not contradict the REAL ID ACT because if the act ever goes into effect, which is highly unlikely, S-238 would need to be revised.*

**PLEASE WORK TO MAKE S-238 MAKE STATE IDs
AND DRIVER'S LICENSES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL!**

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