

State of Vermont House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

Concurrent House Resolution

H.C.R. 362

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Migrant Justice organization on the progress achieved with its Milk with Dignity Program

Offered by: Representatives Morris of Bennington, Gonzalez of Winooski, Ancel of Calais, Botzow of Pownal, Briglin of Thetford, Buckholz of Hartford, Burke of Brattleboro, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Christie of Hartford, Colburn of Burlington, Copeland-Hanzas of Bradford, Gardner of Richmond, Haas of Rochester, Head of South Burlington, Hooper of Montpelier, Jessup of Middlesex, Krowinski of Burlington, Lippert of Hinesburg, Masland of Thetford, Ode of Burlington, O'Sullivan of Burlington, Partridge of Windham, Scheu of Middlebury, Squirrell of Underhill, Stevens of Waterbury, Sullivan of Dorset, Sullivan of Burlington, Toleno of Brattleboro, Weed of Enosburgh, and Yantachka of Charlotte

Whereas, Migrant Justice, an organization established to empower Vermont's migrant farm workers, who are predominately undocumented, from Mexico, and work on dairy farms, has established the Milk with Dignity Program and its complementary Code of Conduct (Code), and

Whereas, under the Code, participating farms are required to: abide by all applicable laws, codes, and regulations regarding working conditions; have zero tolerance for forced labor, unlawful child labor, sexual or physical assault, and retaliation against workers for employment-related advocacy activities; and limit the discharging or disciplining of workers, except for just cause and through a process that is fair to the employee, and

Whereas, among the Code's provisions are: dignified wages that at least equal the statutory minimum wage, even if farm workers are exempted; dignified schedules that include time for rest and leisure; dignified housing, meaning that any housing provided must comply with all housing laws, be voluntary, and afford the workers full tenants' rights, and

Whereas, the Code also requires healthy, safe, and secure workplaces, including workers' compensation; a minimum of five paid sick days per year; protective equipment; and health and safety training that is presented in a manner migrant workers can comprehend, and

Whereas, the Code requires that worker-employee relations be conducted in a cooperative and transparent manner and that a process for resolving Code violations be established, and

Whereas, on October 3, 2017, after two years of negotiations, Ben & Jerry's signed an agreement with Migrant Justice requiring that milk in the ice cream producer's supply chain be from dairy farms that provide their workers one full day off each week; a minimum of eight hours between shifts; and housing that includes electricity, running hot water, and real beds, and

Whereas, the Code will continue to be developed over time through a detailed dialogue between migrant farmworkers and farmers, and it is intended to ensure the fundamental conditions that all workers, regardless of their status, should expect, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Migrant Justice organization on the progress achieved with its Milk with Dignity Program, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Migrant Justice and Ben & Jerry's.