

# ALGER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mary Ann Froberg, Clerk  
101 COURT STREET, MUNISING, MI 49862

## **RESOLUTION #2012-7**

### **RESOLUTION REGARDING FOREIGN WORKER PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, reforming U.S. immigration law is essential to agriculture as farmers and ranchers face a shortage of workers who are willing and able to work on farms and in fields; and

**WHEREAS**, a Farm Bureau economic analysis concluded that \$5 billion to \$9 billion in annual production is in jeopardy if the employee shortage cannot be filled. Jobs in agriculture are physically demanding, conducted in all seasons and often transitory. To most U.S. residents seeking employment, these conditions are not attractive. Yet, for many prospective workers from other countries, these jobs present real economic opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, employment of workers who are in the U.S. illegally is a violation of federal law and consequences for employers can be severe and effective reform must begin at the border. While employing illegal non-residents is a violation of the law, determining the legal status of prospective employees can be difficult, if not impossible, for farmers as employers are strictly limited in what he or she may ask of prospective employees to determine if they are authorized to work; and


**WHEREAS**, only reform through legislation can solve the agricultural worker problem and in seeking a meaningful legislative solution to agriculture's worker shortage, the Alger County Board of Commissioners supports the American Farm Bureau Federation's beliefs that comprehensive reform must include the following:

1. An effective, usable foreign worker program that includes provisions that:
  - a. Address agriculture's unique needs;
  - b. Provide workers with a visa that lasts at least three years and is renewable multiple times;
  - c. Offer an opportunity to continue working and provide a waiver from inadmissibility to interested agricultural workers who were unlawfully present and working in agriculture prior to introduction of legislation but are otherwise admissible under the Immigration and Nationality Act;
  - d. Require workers with a visa to return permanently to their home country when their visa expires, but allow employers to recruit eligible workers indefinitely;
  - e. Allow those who are currently in the U.S. illegally to be eligible to apply for a work visa. This visa would not grant a pathway to citizenship. The application period for this visa would only be for one year;
  - f. Eliminate excessive or duplicative bureaucracy and unnecessary red tape;
  - g. Reduce domestic recruitment costs;
  - h. Include appropriate provisions for foreign commuter workers who return to a residence in their home country nightly or weekly;
  - i. Include the broadest possible definition of agriculture;
  - j. Enable agricultural employers to retain their experienced workforce while transitioning into a worker program; and
  - k. Require a state employment agency to verify the employment eligibility of an applicant before making any referral to an employer.

2. A reliable employment verification system. Mandating E-Verify for agricultural employers without providing a solution to the issues of agricultural labor shortages in the U.S. could have significant negative consequences.
3. An adequate transition provision. The Alger County Board of Commissioners opposes amnesty but supports providing an opportunity for some of those who have worked in agricultural to adjust to legal status.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Michigan Association of Counties; and, the other 82 Michigan County Clerks.

Dated: April 16, 2012

  
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Jerry Doucette, Chairman  
Alger County Board of Commissioners

STATE OF MICHIGAN)  
County of Alger )



I, Mary Ann Froberg, Clerk of the County of Alger and of the County Board of Commissioners, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the resolution adopted by the Board at a regular meeting on April 16, 2012.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the County of Alger, this May 9, 2012 at Munising, Michigan.

  
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Mary Ann Froberg, Clerk