Do Your Jobs.

_Immigrants work hard for America. When will Congress do the same?_

It’s time for House Republicans to do their jobs and schedule a vote on immigration reform.

While Members of Congress are on holiday recess, immigrants are working hard—as they do every day of the year—in some of our country’s toughest jobs. Here’s a snapshot of how hard aspiring Americans work to support some of our nation’s cherished traditions. These workers, and all Americans, need the House GOP to act on immigration reform in 2014.

**CHRISTMAS TREES**

- The Christmas tree tradition originated in Germany, and German immigrants first brought this tradition to the United States.

- There are close to 15,000 farms growing Christmas trees in the U.S., and over 100,000 people are employed full- or part-time in the industry. Many Christmas tree farmers rely on the help of H-2A guest workers and undocumented workers in order to help them harvest their crop each year.

- Christmas trees are a labor-intensive crop, requiring 125-175 hours per acre to harvest. Trees must be harvested within a very narrow window, which makes timely and available labor critical. During peak season, Christmas tree farm workers work 12 to 14 hours per day.

**CHRISTMAS HAMS**

- Nearly half of meat processing industry employees in the U.S. are immigrants.

- Smithfield, which owns the largest pork slaughterhouse in the world, retaliated against workers organizing for immigration reform in 2007 by collaborating with ICE in a raid that arrested 21 workers.

- One manager testified in 1999 that it took only 5-10 minutes to complete slaughtering of 1 pig. This unreasonable speed is directly responsible for higher injury rates. As one worker told Human Rights Watch, “The line is so fast there is no time to sharpen the knife. The knife gets dull and you have to cut harder. That’s when it really starts to hurt, and that’s when you cut yourself. I cut my hand at the end of my shift [and got stitches], [t]hey told me to go back to work at 3:00. I never stopped working.”

Christmas runs on America’s workers. They do their jobs. Congress, why aren’t you doing yours?
**MISTLETOE AND HOLLY**
- Mistletoe and holly are grown in nurseries and on farms for commercial sales. The Department of Labor reports that 53% of farmworkers are undocumented—others estimate as many as 90%.
- One Connecticut nursery grower who underwent a “silent raid” in 2011 lost $2 million in revenue because he lost his workers.
- **197 days a year:** the average workload of an undocumented farmworker—squeezed into 36 weeks of seasonal work. (The average authorized worker works 185 days a year.) However, 37% of undocumented farmworkers work more than 250 days a year.
- **53 hours a week:** the average work week of skilled farmworkers (in tasks such as irrigation).
- **$318 a week:** the average wage of a noncitizen cropworker in 2006.
- Undocumented farmworkers are **50% more likely to lack access to a sanitary facility** than authorized workers.
- **17.8%** of undocumented farmworkers reported muscle or skeletal injuries in the past year. Only **9.8%** of undocumented farmworkers have health insurance.

**EGG NOG**
- **62%** of all milk produced in 2008 was produced by immigrant workers. 47% of dairy farms used immigrant labor.
- Eliminating immigrant labor in the dairy industry would cause milk production to **decline by 29.5 billion pounds**, and would raise the cost of milk **61%**.
- After Georgia passed its Arizona-style immigration law, its egg industry lost an estimated **$300 million** because no workers were available to harvest eggs.
- A 1996 OSHA investigation found that workers on DeCoster’s farms (many of whom were undocumented) were forced to handle dead chicken carcasses and manure with their bare hands and live in rat-infested housing.

**APPLE CIDER**
- Apple pickers have to scale tall ladders and carry 40-pound sacks of apples on their chests for at least eight hours a day.
- Apple pickers make up about **50% of all H-2A jobs in Washington state**, and 34% of all H-2A jobs in New York. Nationwide, apples are the fourth largest crop grown by farmers who employ H-2A workers.
- Among all crops, 26% of undocumented farmworkers live next to an area where pesticide is applied. This is especially dangerous for apple pickers: according to the Environmental Working Group, apples are among the crops with the most residue of toxic pesticides.

*Christmas runs on immigrant workers. They do their jobs. Congress, why aren’t you doing yours?*