**Drivers’ Licenses for Immigrant Workers**

Wisconsin fruit and vegetable farmers have hired immigrant workers to harvest their crops for years. As dairy farms have modernized and grown, immigrant labor has become an integral labor force on some farms.

According to a 2009 University of Wisconsin study, in 1998 only 5 percent of workers on Wisconsin dairy farms were immigrants. By 2008 they made up 40 percent and numbered more than 5000 people.

Like agriculture, construction, fast food restaurants, and other service industries have seen an increase in immigrant workers.

To comply with the Federal Real ID Act of 2005, a Wisconsin law went into effect in 2007, that established new requirements for lawfully present non-U.S. citizens seeking to obtain a Wisconsin driver’s license. Prior to this law, Wisconsin was one of 10 states that did not require an immigrant to show proof of legal status (valid visa, permanent residency, or U.S. citizenship) in order to obtain a driver’s license. Now individuals applying for a driver’s license must provide documentary proof that they are either a U.S. citizen or legally present in the country.

The result was that some immigrants who once were able to obtain a driver’s license no longer could. Those immigrant workers with jobs that required them to drive, either couldn’t or did so without illegally.

Farms and other employers have suggested that Wisconsin law be changed to allow immigrant workers to be able to obtain a driver’s license more easily.

**WFBF does not have policy on the criteria for driver’s licenses for immigrant workers. Therefore:**

\* Should WFBF support requiring legal documentation of immigrant workers in order to obtain a driver’s license?

\* Should WFBF support a change in driver’s license requirements so immigrant workers can obtain a driver’s license?