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RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT STRIKING FARM WORKERS

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WHEREAS: Familias Unidas por la Justicia/Families United for Justice, an organization of over 250 farm workers and families, at the Sakuma Brothers Farm in northwest Washington State, has been organizing since July to win fair pay, better treatment and conditions, and to ensure the security of their jobs; and

WHEREAS: These workers have harvested the company's strawberries, blueberries and blackberries, some migrating to Sakuma Berry Farms for over 14 years, coming each year with their families from as far away as central California, over a thousand miles, at a cost of over \$1200 round trip; and

WHEREAS: This year the company would not pay a wage and piece-rate that could support workers' families, gave them living quarters in a labor camp in bad condition, and treated them with discrimination and insults on the job; and

WHEREAS: Workers have gone on strike three times, and with support from Community to Community Development have won important concessions: defending a coworker from a retaliatory firing, ending a system that put local white teenagers with no work experience in supervisory roles, moving an abusive foreman from the fields, and improving conditions in the camps; and

WHEREAS: In the face of threats of eviction and firing workers organized a labor organization called Familias Unidas por la Justicia and forced the owners of the company to talk with them directly, but the owners hired consultants and continue to break agreements and refuse to resolve the most important issues; and

WHEREAS: Sakuma Brothers Farms has been certified by the U.S. Department of Labor to bring in 160 H2A contract guest workers this season, and has said they would not pay striking workers any more than they have to pay these H2A workers, and sometimes has said they'd pay less; and

WHEREAS: Familias Unidas por la Justicia is protesting the use of this contract labor program to keep wages down, and is concerned that when the company's long time workers come back next year Sakuma Brothers Farms will replace them using this guest worker program, and they will therefore lose their jobs; and

WHEREAS: The members of Familias Unidas por la Justicia are U.S. based migrant workers and immigrants, indigenous Mixteco and Triqui families, who believe it is unfair for the company and the Department of Labor to pit them against other immigrants, brought to the U.S. in a program often called close to slavery; and

WHEREAS: The H2A contract guest worker program may be greatly expanded as the new "W" visa program by immigration reform proposals in Congress, including S. 744 passed by the U.S. Senate, which mandates a lower wage for farm workers than even that paid under the present H2A program in Washington State, and would allow growers to bring in four times the number of workers contracted under the H2A program last year,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Labor Council supports Familias Unidas por la Justicia in their struggle for fair pay and treatment, for job security, against discrimination, and for justice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Labor Council will communicate our support of Familias Unidas por la Justicia to Sakuma Brothers Farms and Haagen Dazs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Labor Council will recommend a boycott of berries sold by Sakuma Brothers Farms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Labor Council will continue to oppose any immigration reform that includes the expansion of guest worker programs because of the way they undermine wages and threaten the jobs of workers, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Labor Council will circulate this resolution to other Bay Area Labor Councils and encourage them to do the same.

Submitted by the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, SF Chapter, and adopted unanimously by the San Francisco Labor Council on October 28, 2013.

Respectfully,



Tim Paulson
Executive Director