

# American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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March 28, 2015

Dear Secretary Navarrete Prida,

On behalf of the 12.5 million workers of the AFL-CIO I am writing to urge you to continue to dialogue with La Alianza de Organizaciones Nacionales, Estatales y Municipales por la Justicia Social del Valle de San Quintín ('La Alianza') representing 80,000 agricultural workers and ensure that the rights of these workers under Mexican law and international conventions are protected.

Members of La Alianza, working in alliance with the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB), are demanding an increase in wages and the termination of the protection contracts held by the CTM and the CROC that have led to egregious violations of their rights. The practice of "protection contracts" is the single most serious threat to freedom of association and democratic collective bargaining in Mexico. It is an issue that has been raised during the recent delegation of the International Trade Union Confederation and in complaints to the International Labor Organization.

The documented worker rights violations in San Quintin include the refusal to pay overtime and social protection benefits, sexual harassment, lack of maternity and paternity leave, child labor, pesticide exposure, discrimination and violations of freedom of association and collective bargaining. These violations have resulted in workers organizing to protect their rights and improve their working and living conditions.

I urge you to protect the rights of these workers and ensure the effective implementation of Mexican labor laws and the ILO fundamental worker rights. Workers arrested for exercising their right to protest should be released. I hope you will support the creation of an outside commission to document the situation and ensure that negotiations result in a decent wage and improved working conditions for the workers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cathy Feingold", written in a cursive style.

Cathy Feingold

Director, International Department, AFL-CIO