

# Desert Sun.

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## **A thought for immigration cynics: Would you trade your life for that of the migrant?**

Selina Castaneda-Gutierrez

August 18, 2018

It is written in the Pledge of Allegiance: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

"With liberty and justice for all..." isn't that wonderful? Still, America has seemed to have forgotten this statement when considering the mental and physical pain that immigrants face daily, especially due to the political dysfunction that has encompassed the issue of immigration.

The latest immigration bill, the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act, is a disaster waiting to happen. According to President Donald Trump himself, he will not execute any immigration reform act if it does not involve his plan for a wall along the southern U.S. border.

The bill does have some benefits, such as tougher measures to stop immigrants from overstaying their visas, allow for DREAMers to remain for a period of six years (with the chance to renew their permission after the time expires) with work opportunity, to the creation of a new visa program for work.

This, however, is just the surface level of information that people know from the bill. According to The Cato Institute, what many don't know is that only 12 percent of DREAMers would actually benefit from this bill. This is far from the majority of what the public might think.

What many citizens with normal jobs do not understand is the amount of hard labor that many immigrants put into planting agricultural crops and producing healthy vegetation for all of us to eat. Spending countless hours standing or hunched over, farmworkers burn out their bodies in excessive heat, only to be paid perhaps \$12 or less per hour.

Also, farmworkers don't just consist of illegal immigrants. Residents and citizens are among their ranks as well. Due to them not having received an education, this is the only job many of these workers can find.

Unfair wages, unreliable health insurance, inhumane treatment of workers is the kind of suffering these farmworkers and their families have to face daily.

Farmworkers are humans, too, who deserve equal opportunity of work, payment and justice, as much as any other human being in the United States. Farmworkers matter because they provide the fruit of their hard labor in the form of food that we all eat.

We should take immigrants lives into consideration when executing new bills and laws, because as the Pledge of Allegiance states, we are “one nation, indivisible.” Farmworkers, whether they are illegal or legal, are part of this one nation (U.S.) as well.