

Catholic Church. National Conference of Catholic Bishops.  
Resolution on farm labor.

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**Resolution**  
**on**  
**FARM LABOR**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

**November 20, 1975**

June 5, 1975 marked an important turning point in the history of farm labor relations in the United States. It was on that day that the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act was signed into law by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. This is the first law ever enacted in any jurisdiction, federal or state, guaranteeing farm workers the right to determine, by secret ballot elections, which union, if any, they want to represent them. It is a good law and one that might well serve as a model for parallel legislation in other key agricultural states as well as at the congressional level in Washington. While it will not automatically resolve all of the problems involved in the farm labor dispute, it does provide the parties with a set of enforceable procedures through which they can begin, at long last, to settle their differences in an orderly manner. In short, it represents an historic step in the right direction.

We salute the innovative leadership of Governor Brown who set into motion the process which resulted in the enactment of this long overdue statute by an overwhelming vote of the California legislature and with the almost unanimous support of the parties involved. We sincerely congratulate all who participated in this process: members of the legislature, the many and varied grower organizations, the United Farm Workers of America, the Western Conference of Teamsters, and the technical advisors and consultants who helped to draft the statute.

We call upon all concerned—state officials, growers and union representatives—to cooperate with one another in implementing the spirit as well as the letter of the law. It would be a tragedy if the purpose of the law, which holds out such promise for the future of sound labor relations in the agricultural industry, were to be thwarted in practice, for whatever reason. If experience demonstrates that either the statute itself or its administration needs to be improved, we pledge our support to this end. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops stands prepared to cooperate with the parties to the fullest possible extent in their common effort to bring about a new era of peace and justice in the agricultural industry, not only in California but throughout the nation.

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE  
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