

SENATE BILL SB-28

Introduced by Senator Melissa Hurtado (D-16)

An act relating to Farmworker Resource Centers Act.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB-28, Melissa Hurtado (D-16). Farmworker Resource Centers Act.

Current California law does not significantly assist farmworkers based in rural communities. Current law provides farmworkers with assistance through a variety of general labor laws and volunteer programs; however, this assistance is limited in scope, and the programs are not organized into a concerted effort to provide farmworkers with a system of resources to learn about their rights and how to access important services.

This bill would establish Farmworker Resource Centers in rural areas of the state with significant agricultural activity in order to provide farmworkers with access to educational materials and services that assist them with understanding their legal rights in the workplace and connect them to healthcare providers, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and other resources.

Vote: Majority. **Appropriations/fiscal:** no. **Local program:** no.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

- a. This bill would direct the State Department of Labor to develop a program with local organizations to create Farmworker Resource Centers in rural areas with a significant amount of agricultural activity. These centers would provide education about farmworkers' legal rights in the workplace and connect them to important resources, including:
 1. Labor Rights and Workplace Safety Information:
 - a. Centers would provide information and training regarding workers rights, plain-language educational materials about workers rights, training about workplace safety, workers compensation, and wage and hour laws, and provide Spanish-language educational materials about workers rights and workplace safety.
 - (2) Connection to Healthcare Providers:
 - a. Centers would connect workers with healthcare providers in their community, assist them in navigating the healthcare system, and provide referrals to community-based mental health services and food/nutrition resources.
 - b. Assistance with finding safe and affordable housing.

SEC. 2.

1. ESL Classes:
 - a. Centers would offer ESL classes at little to no cost to farmworkers.
 - b. The program would rely on local organizations such as agricultural worker organizations, nonprofits, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and other organizations that serve farmworkers in these communities. This bill would not require any new funding to implement it.

SEC. 3

- a. This bill would require the State Department of Labor to oversee the program and ensure that Farmworker Resource Centers provide the required services.
- b. The bill would require the Department to submit a report to the Legislature each year, by June 30, evaluating the operation and effectiveness of the program.
- c. The report would include the number of centers established, the number of people utilizing the centers' resources, the resources made available, feedback from farmworkers and other stakeholders, and recommendations regarding potential improvements or expansions.

SEC. 4

- a. It takes effect January 1, 2027.