Sierra Club

RE: SB 82 — Farmworker Heat Safety and Small Farm Support Act- Support

November 5, 2026

The Honorable Senator Anna Caballero

California State Senate

Sacramento, California

RE: Support for SB 82 — Farmworker Heat Safety and Small Farm Support Act

Members of the Committee,

We are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 82, introduced by Senator Caballero, the Farmworker Heat Safety and Small Farm Support Act.

As California experiences worsening conditions and more severe weather, we believe it is important to protect agricultural workers, who remain most vulnerable to these conditions, especially extreme heat. Farmworkers spend long hours outdoors performing physically demanding work, especially in the Central Valley. In these areas, summer temperatures can become dangerous. Protecting these workers is not only a matter of workplace safety but also a key part of environmental justice and climate resilience.

We support the bill's language accessibility and anti-retaliation provisions, which are important for workers who may otherwise not report unsafe conditions. It explains that heat safety training should be created in languages workers understand, including Indigenous languages, which helps assure vulnerable workers know their rights.

SB 82 includes provisions in which employers provide paid cooling breaks based on the heat index rather than air temperature alone. This creates a more comprehensive approach to evaluating dangerous working conditions. Requiring paid breaks ensures that agricultural workers do not have to choose between protecting their health and maintaining their source of income.

Smaller farms may face financial challenges when implementing additional workplace protections. Assisting these employers advances worker safety while supporting the long-term sustainability of California's agricultural communities. The proposed bill establishes the Small

Farm Heat Safety Grant Program, where $15 million would be allocated for financial assistance to small agricultural employers that seek to purchase shade structures, cooling stations, and other safety equipment.

Managing the effects of climate change should also mean protecting the communities and workers disproportionately affected by environmental risks. Senate Bill 82 represents an opportunity to strengthen California's response to extreme heat and support agricultural workers and farms.

For these reasons listed above, the Sierra Club respectfully encourages the committee to support SB 82.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Britney Vasquez, Sierra Club Representative

Britney Vasquez