

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

April 23, 2024

Anthony Peterson
Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) of Washington
815 Fruitvale Blvd.
Yakima, WA 98902

Dear Mr. Peterson,

We strongly support Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) of Washington's application to the U.S. Department of Labor's National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)—FOA-ETA-24-15. The requested grant funds will allow OIC to continue serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their dependents, providing quality workforce-related services and developing skills to pursue a career of their choice in the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors.

The proposed program includes services for adults 18-years-old and up and youth ages 14 to 24 living in the highest-need agricultural areas. It includes targeted outreach, comprehensive assessments, development of in-demand employment services, an action plan, training, experiential learning activities, placement in high-growth industry employment, and follow-up services. More importantly, OIC has more than 23 years of experience working directly with migrant and seasonal farmworkers to ensure programmatic outcomes are met.

Additionally, we have witnessed OIC of Washington's dedication and effectiveness in addressing our community's needs through their three pillared divisions: Education and Career Services, Supportive Services, Outreach, Recruitment and Data. In the past year, OIC has enrolled students in over 2,000 Education and Career Services across 14 Counties and has issued nearly 600 students a combined total of approximately \$900,000 in scholarships and tuition assistance to enroll and attain industry-recognized credentials. OIC's track record of creating a generational impact on rural communities throughout Washington State is unmatched.

For these reasons, Whatcom County Council wholeheartedly supports OIC's application to the U.S. Department of Labor – National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP).

We believe that by working together, we can create meaningful and sustainable solutions to address our communities' challenges.

Sincerely,

Barry Buchanan
Whatcom County Council Chair