



Legislation Text

File #: 43987, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Recognizing February 14th (Valentine's Day) as International Flower Workers' Day in the city of Madison and acknowledging workers in flower-producing countries by stating the city's support to practices that respect labor rights abroad.

Body

WHEREAS, Colombia is the second largest exporter of flowers worldwide, with an industry value of 1.3 billion dollars; and,

WHEREAS, 77% of flowers exported from Colombia come to the United States; and,

WHEREAS, international flower workers face daily health risks from contact with pesticides; and,

WHEREAS, three of the pesticides used in close proximity to Colombian flower workers have been labeled extremely toxic and one fourth of the pesticides used around Colombian flower workers are classified as carcinogens which are restricted for use in the U.S.; and,

WHEREAS, pesticides can cause serious health impacts including blood and skin cancer, and repetitive motion work can cause other health conditions; and,

WHEREAS, pregnancy tests and birth control use represent conditions to gain or maintain employment for many female flower workers in Colombia, reportedly due to their proximity to toxic pesticides that cause birth defects and health risks for pregnant women; and,

WHEREAS, flower workers from Valentine's Day to Mother's Day work up to 12-22 hours per day, six days a week, while earning pay that does not allow them to rise out of poverty; and,

WHEREAS, workloads or production goals have progressively increased over the years since the beginning of the flower industry in Colombia in the mid-60s; and,

WHEREAS, these workers have been denied their right to collectively organize, bargain and strike; and,

WHEREAS, the labor force of Colombian flower workers is predominately women, one-third of whom are single mothers; and,

WHEREAS, the Labor Action Plan (LAP) was implemented to improve labor conditions for workers in Colombia; and,

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) has suggested a revision to the LAP in order to ensure worker safety in Colombia; and,

WHEREAS, the commemoration of International Flower Workers' Day would acknowledge and reaffirm the United States commitment to workers' rights,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council recognize February 14th (Valentine's Day) as International Flower Workers' Day in the city of Madison and acknowledges workers in flower-producing countries by stating the city's support to practices that respect labor rights abroad.