



City Council



December 15, 2020

Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu
Embassy of India to the United States
2107 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington DC, 20008

RE: In Support of Farmers Effected by Recent Farming Bills in India

Given the strong agricultural heritage and vibrant Indian community in Yuba City, California, the Yuba City City Council offer strong and unwavering support of the farmers effected by the recent passing of the following bills in India:

- Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill 2020,
- Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services 2020,
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020, which was passed by the Indian Parliament in September 2020.

New regulations that have been set forth have caused concern among India's 86% of cultivated farmland that is controlled by smallholder farmers who own less than two hectares (five acres) of land.

Smallholder farmers are apprehensive because their livelihood is threatened, and fear they will not have sufficient bargaining power through negotiations to profitably sell produce to large corporations. Smallholder farmers have seen a dramatic rise in prices of fertilizers and seed over the years as these needed farming inputs are almost exclusively sold through the private sector. Producers have only been able to rely on minimum support prices (MSP). As these new rules do not guarantee any minimum price for any product, farmers are understandably concerned that existing MSP will soon be abolished, and produce will be sold at an unsustainable rate for Farmers.

In response, many farmers in India have travelled from their homes to assemble peacefully and in protest of these new regulations. Many have reported that they have been assaulted and harassed by others in an attempt to stop them from exercising the civil rights granted to all Indian citizens. I call on the authorities and government agencies to act to ensure that these peaceful protestors are protected against such abuses. Further, we must ensure that small farmers' interests are safeguarded and protected through the use of disciplined price setting. It is for these reasons that I write and respectfully request your support and assistance to obtain the necessary repeal of these bills.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Marc Boomgaarden, Mayor

Dave Shaw, Vice Mayor

Grace Espindola, Councilmember

Shon Harris, Councilmember

Wade Kirchner, Councilmember