

## **Employer to send Chatham-Kent injured migrant worker home despite needing medical care**

(Chatham-Kent) Kevin Campbell, an injured migrant worker from Jamaica, is being forced to return home before receiving the necessary healthcare for an injury sustained while working in Ontario.

Campbell 33, has worked as a migrant worker in the Chatham Kent region for the past 5 years. On June 1, 2016, he fell off a scissors lift while at work and seriously injured his back. Campbell requires specialized care that he will not be able to receive if he returns home to Jamaica. His employer gave him only two days' notice that he would be sent home.

Mr. Campbell is available for comment as he wants to share his experience with others to raise the alarm bells on how migrant workers are treated. Justicia for Migrant Workers will be hosting a press conference this morning to draw attention to Campbell's situation and what happens to migrant workers when they get injured as a result of their labour.

"I've been coming to Canada, as a farmworker, for five years. Nobody really expects to sustain this kind of injury" says Campbell. "It was awful and it's not something you think will happen to you. But getting injured and then getting forced out of the country is shocking. This is not right, I didn't ask to get hurt," continues Campbell.

Migrant workers like Mr. Campbell are employed in Canada under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, a 50 year old Federal program that brings migrant workers from the Caribbean and Mexico to Canada to work for up to eight months a year. Migrant workers are tied to one employer, are denied any form of labour or social mobility and must return home once their contract ends. When migrant workers are injured their employers can send them home, even if medical care is still needed. The Canadian Medical Association Journal recently reported that, between 2001 and 2011, nearly 800 migrant workers were repatriated for injuries and illness sustained while in Ontario.

"The Harvesting Freedom campaign aims to expose the injustices in this morally bankrupt system" says Tanya Ferguson, a member of Justicia for Migrant Workers. "We have documented countless testimonies from injured migrant workers like Kevin over the last decade. The federal government must help Kevin stay in Canada to receive healthcare and end the barbaric practice of disposing of injured migrant workers out of the country," continues Tanya Ferguson.

Migrant workers, allies and community supporters kicked off a caravan and march to Ottawa to call for migrant workers' rights. The group started in Leamington this past Sunday and expects to arrive in Ottawa on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The press conference will take place today at 11:15 am at the Workers Memorial Monument in Chatham on Grand Ave. across the street from the Canadian Tire / Thames-Lea Plaza.

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