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## **United Farm Workers Endorse Antonio Villaraigosa for Governor Citing His Decades of Fighting for Worker Rights and Protections**

SAN DIEGO, CA – Today, dozens of United Farm Workers (UFW) labor union traveled to the California Democratic Party Convention in San Diego where they held a rally to endorse Antonio Villaraigosa for governor.

“Over several months, elected farm worker leaders – from companies under UFW contracts across California’s major agricultural regions – discussed the governor’s race, studied the candidates’ words and actions and spent a weekend interviewing the four candidates about their records of supporting farm workers, Antonio Villaraigosa received overwhelming support,” said UFW President Arturo S. Rodriguez. “For decades, during good times and bad, Antonio has consistently stood up for us, the rights of workers and never backed down from a fight for what’s right. Antonio has marched with farm workers, made appeals to legislators, walked picket lines and used his influence to help farm workers win a better life in all of our important struggles.”

The UFW actively participates in campaigns for candidates who support the issues that are key to improving the lives of farm workers, as well as the issues that affect Latinos living in our urban centers: education, worker rights, immigrant rights, health care and the protection of human rights.

“I am honored and humbled to have the support of my UFW brothers and sisters,” said Mayor Villaraigosa. “This is particularly meaningful to me as I started my community activism in the farm worker grape boycott. At the age of 15, I was inspired to see farm workers organize and unite to fight for the dignity and respect they deserved. They taught me that in order to make change, you have to speak up and take action. As governor, I will continue the fight to extend greater economic opportunity and equality to all Californians.”

Prior to being elected to office, Villaraigosa had a 25-year career as a labor organizers and leader. In 1977-1985, Villaraigosa was steward, chief-steward and president of American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), representing employees in the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission in five states. He was also an organizer/field representative for SEIU 1000 and United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), a union of more than 33,000 educators.

Labor union support for Mayor Villaraigosa continues to grow. Recently, Villaraigosa was endorsed by the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, California Police Chiefs Association and Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association.