## 1

#### Interpretation: Unconditional means not conditional or limited. – to clarify, the affirmative must defend the right of all workers to strike at any time.

#### Merriam Webster (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unconditional)//ww> pbj

not conditional or limited

#### Violation: They defend agriculture workers which is a subset of all workers.

#### Standards:

#### [1] Limits – allows an aff infinite permutations of arbitrary conditions like no striking for medical workers, not if it causes harm, or only for a certain duration. Explosion of aff ground makes neg prep burden impossible, either killing neg ground or forcing the neg to read generics that barely link, always letting aff win.

#### [2] Precision – not defending the text of the resolution justifies the affirmative doing away with random words in the resolution which a] means they’re not within the topic which is a voter for jurisdiction since you can only vote affirmative on the resolution and this debate never should have happened, b] they’re unpredictable and impossible to engage in so we always lose

#### [3] Ground – kills neg ground since they can pre-empt all neg strategy which makes all condition PICs not competitive and kills all links to the DA since they’ll just condition it like the Health Workers DA, destroys engagement and advocacy skills

#### Drop the Debater –

#### [1] sets a precedent that debaters wont be abusive

#### [2] DTA is the same since you drop the aff

#### Voters:

#### [1] Fairness – constitutive to the judge to decide the better debater, only fairness is in your jurisdiction because it skews decision making

#### [2] Education – the only portable education from debate that we care about

#### Competing Interps:

#### [2] functionally the same as reasonability – we debate over a specified briteline which is a counter interp

#### [3] judge intervention – judge has to intervene on what’s reasonable, creates a race to the bottom where debaters exploit judge tolerance for questionable argumentation.

#### No RVIs

#### [1] illogical for you to get offense just for being fair – it’s the 1ac’s burden

#### [2] baiting - rvi’s incentivize debaters to read abusive positions to win off theory

## 2

#### Reconciliation passes now without further cuts – Holdouts tentatively say yes and our ev assumes every aff non-uq warrant

Reklaitis 12/02 [Victor, MarketWatch's Money & Politics reporter and is based in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining MarketWatch, he served as an assistant editor and reporter at Investor's Business Daily, “Biden’s big social-spending bill probably will pass Senate this month without many cuts to it, analysts say”, 12-02-2021, https://www.marketwatch.com/story/bidens-big-social-spending-bill-probably-will-pass-senate-this-month-without-many-cuts-to-it-analysts-say-11638466738]//pranav

Will President Joe Biden’s $2 trillion social-spending and climate package actually get the Senate’s OK this month, as that chamber’s leader has promised? Two analysts from opposite ends of the political spectrum said that looks likely, as they spoke on Wednesday with MarketWatch for a Barron’s Live episode. “I think the chances are very, very good that this bill will pass, and I wouldn’t bet the mortgage on it, but I would predict that it’s going to happen by this month,” said Seth Hanlon, a senior fellow at the liberal Center for American Progress. Kyle Pomerleau, a senior fellow at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, concurred with Hanlon, as the analysts assessed Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer’s stated goal of passage by Christmas. The legislation already got the House’s approval last month, so Biden can sign it into law if the Senate acts and the two chambers reconcile their versions of the measure. “I think that the Build Back Better Act ultimately passes. I think before Christmas seems like a reasonable timeline,” Pomerleau said. “There are other political challenges involved, if this bleeds over into next year, and I think that the Democrats want to avoid that.” Democrats also could be motivated by not wanting a lapse in monthly child tax credit payments, according to Hanlon. Those payouts, which began over the summer and provide up to $300 per child to families, would get extended for another year in the current version of the Build Back Better Act. “The child tax credit payments — the last one would be done on Dec. 15, and so I think the Democrats are going to want to continue those into January and not have them cut off suddenly,” the Center for American Progress expert said. Hanlon and Pomerleau said they don’t expect huge changes to the Build Back Better Act’s overall price tag, even as moderate Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia has expressed opposition to some items in the House version of the bill, including a plan for paid leave and a $4,500 tax credit for electric vehicles made in unionized U.S. factories. Another issue that’s dividing Democratic lawmakers is a proposed lift to the SALT cap, which refers to a limit on deductions from federal income tax for state and local taxes. “I think that $2 trillion in spending, including the tax credits, is a reasonable place that they will end up,” Pomerleau said, referring to what’s a likely final price tag. Meanwhile, Hanlon noted that a lot of negotiating has happened this year to get to the current state of affairs, after Sen. Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent who usually votes with Democrats and chairs his chamber’s budget committee, proposed a much larger spending package. “If you back up to where we started with President Biden’s agenda and Sen. Sanders’s budget, we’re down to a relatively narrow, limited set of issues and a pretty narrow band of a total price tag,” he said. “I might expect that to shrink somewhat because of Sen. Manchin, but not that much. I think 90% of the bill will stay the same.” Democrats can’t afford to lose the support of any senator who typically votes with them, as they advance the bill through a process known as budget reconciliation. That’s because the Senate is split 50-50, with the party in control only because Vice President Kamala Harris can break ties.

#### Biden PC is key to getting democratic skeptics on board, but it’s tentative

Cochrane & Weisman 11/05 [Emily Cochrane - correspondent based in Washington. She has covered Congress since late 2018, focusing on the annual debate over government funding and economic legislation, ranging from emergency pandemic relief to infrastructure, Jonathan Weisman - congressional correspondent, veteran Washington journalist and author of the novel “No. 4 Imperial Lane” and the nonfiction book “(((Semitism))): Being Jewish in America in the Age of Trump.” His career in journalism stretches back 30 years, “Live Updates: House Democrats Push Toward Votes on Biden’s Agenda”, 11-05-2021, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/05/us/biden-spending-infrastructure-bill]//pranav

At the White House, Mr. Biden called on lawmakers to pass the legislation. “I’m asking every House member, member of the House of Representatives, to vote yes on both these bills right now,” the president said. Spooked by Tuesday’s electoral drubbing, Democrats labored to overcome concerns among moderates about the cost and details of a rapidly evolving, $1.85 trillion social safety net and climate plan and push it through over unified Republican opposition. They also hoped to clear a Senate-passed $1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill — the largest investment in the nation’s aging public works in a decade — for Mr. Biden’s signature. Top Democratic officials said they were confident they could complete both measures by day’s end, but Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California and her team continued to haggle with holdouts. Several moderates were pushing for more information about the cost of the sprawling plan, including a nonpartisan analysis from the Congressional Budget Office, the official scorekeeper responsible for calculating the fiscal impact of the 2,135-page legislation. “I think everyone’s waiting for the C.B.O. to do their job,” said Representative Jared Golden, Democrat of Maine, speaking to reporters on Friday morning as he left Ms. Pelosi’s office, where White House officials were also meeting on next steps. But Representative Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, the majority leader, said the cost estimate would not be ready by the end of the day, and a person familiar with the discussions said a score from the budget office was weeks away from completion. “We’re working on it,” Mr. Hoyer said. Ms. Pelosi spent much of the day on Thursday buttonholing lawmakers on the House floor to try to corral support for the social policy bill, which includes monthly payments to families with children, universal prekindergarten, a four-week paid family and medical leave program, health care subsidies and a broad array of climate change initiatives. Mr. Biden and members of his cabinet worked the phones to win over Democratic skeptics. With Republicans united in opposition, Democrats could afford to lose as few as three votes from their side. As Democrats labored to unite their members behind the bill, Republicans sought to wreak procedural havoc on the House floor, forcing a vote to adjourn the chamber that leaders held open for hours to buy time for their negotiations. While the Senate approved the $1 trillion infrastructure bill in August, the measure has stalled as progressives have repeatedly refused to supply their votes for it until there is agreement on the other bill.

#### Business lobbying backlash ensures Sinema flips – empirics prove she doesn’t like similar bills

Duda ’21 [Jeremy, Prior to joining the Arizona Mirror, he worked at the Arizona Capitol Times, where he spent eight years covering the Governor's Office and two years as editor of the Yellow Sheet Report, “Business groups urge Kelly, Sinema to oppose pro-union PRO Act”, 08-30-2021, https://www.azmirror.com/2021/08/30/business-groups-urge-kelly-sinema-to-oppose-pro-union-pro-act/]//pranav

Business groups publicly called on Democratic U.S. Sens. Mark Kelly and Kyrsten Sinema to oppose a sweeping piece of pro-organized labor legislation that would wipe out Arizona’s “right-to-work” law that prohibits mandatory union membership. At a press conference at the office of the Arizona chapter of the Associated General Contractors near the state Capitol on Monday, leaders of several business groups warned that the Protecting the Right to Organize Act — or PRO Act, as it’s more commonly known — would undermine Arizona’s recovery from the economic slump it faced last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, undermine the “gig economy,” jeopardize secret ballots in union organization votes, give unions access to confidential employee information and strip Arizonans of their right not to join a union. The bill would allow unions to override right-to-work laws and collect union dues from non-members who still benefit from collective bargaining. It would also prohibit company-sponsored meetings to urge employees against unionizing, define most independent contractors as employees, protect employees who are attempting to unionize from being fired and allow unions to engage in secondary strikes in support of other striking workers, among other provisions. “We want to thank and tell Senator Sinema and Senator Kelly that we appreciate them for not signing on as co-sponsors to the PRO Act, because if they were to change their opinions, New York Sen. Chuck Schumer will put this up for a vote,” said Danny Seiden, president and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Kelly and Sinema are two of only three Senate Democrats, along with Virginia’s Mark Warner, who haven’t co-sponsored the bill or thrown their public support behind it. Kelly last month told the Huffington Post that he opposes the independent contractor provision, but that he supports the “overall goals” of the legislation. Sinema is widely known as a holdout on the Democratic side and hasn’t supported the PRO Act, but spokesman Pablo Sierra-Carmona indicated that she hasn’t made up her mind, and that she won’t do so unless and until it comes up for a vote in the Senate.

#### They lash out against Reconciliation – it will includes similar provisions

FURCHTGOTT-ROTH 10/09 [Diana, former acting assistant secretary for economic policy at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, is adjunct professor of economics at George Washington University, “Democrats can't pass the PRO Act, so it's buried in the reconciliation bill”, 10-09-2021, https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/575992-dems-cant-pass-the-pro-act-so-its-buried-in-the-reconciliation-bill]//pranav

Union membership has been declining for decades as workers find better uses than union dues for their hard-earned dollars. But union bosses and their supporters are trying to change the law to force hard-working Americans into unions. How? Through the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), a bill that would expand the power of union leaders at the expense of workers. After sailing through the House, the PRO Act now appears stalled in the Senate and Democrats are trying to slip some PRO Act provisions into a massive reconciliation bill. American workers are wise to turn down union membership. Union pension plans are in trouble. In 2020, the Labor Department listed 121 union plans in critical status, defined as less than 65 percent funded, and 61 in endangered status, with less than 80 percent funded. Unions desperately need new workers to join, because they pay contributions for many years without withdrawing money. Most recently, Amazon workers in Alabama resoundingly rejected efforts by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store International Union to organize their plant, with more than 70 percent of workers voting against the union. The union’s plan was in critical status between 2015 and 2019, and the Labor Department informed the plan’s administrators that it had to be reorganized by reducing benefits and increasing contributions. Union leaders and their allies on Capitol Hill believe the way to increase membership after decades of decline is to pass elements of the PRO Act through reconciliation. Unlike the PRO Act, which needs 60 votes in the Senate to enable it to move to President Biden’s desk for signature, the reconciliation bill, which deals with taxes and spending, needs only a simple majority. So via a massive reconciliation bill, congressional Democrats are trying to move some labor union provisions of the PRO Act by arguing they are actually revenue raisers.

#### Reconciliation is k2 stopping existential climate change – warming is incremental and every change in temperature is vital

Higgins 8/16 [Trevor, Senior Director, Domestic Climate and Energy, “Budget Reconciliation Is the Key to Stopping Climate Change”, 08-16-2021, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/news/2021/08/16/502681/budget-reconciliation-key-stopping-climate-change/]//pranav

The United States is suffering acutely from the chaotic changes in climate that scientists now directly attribute to the burning of fossil fuels and other human activity. The drought, fires, extreme heat, and floods that have already killed hundreds this summer across the continent and around the world are a tragedy—and a warning of worsening instability yet to come. However, this week, the Senate initiated an extraordinary legislative response that would set the world on a different path. Enacting the full scope of President Joe Biden’s Build Back Better agenda would put the American economy to work leading a global transition to clean energy and stabilizing the climate. A look at what’s coming next through the budget reconciliation process reveals a ray of hope that is easy to miss amid the fitful negotiations of recent months: At long last, Congress is on the verge of major legislation that would build a more equitable, just, and inclusive clean energy economy. This is our shot to stop climate change. Building a clean energy future must start now Until the global economy stops polluting the air and instead starts to draw down the emissions of years past, the world will continue to heat up, blundering past perilous tipping points that threaten irreversible and catastrophic consequences. Stemming the extent of warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius rather 2 degrees or worse will reduce the risk of crossing such tipping points or otherwise exceeding the adaptive capacity of human society. Every degree matters. Stabilizing global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius starts with cutting annual greenhouse gas emissions in the United States to half of peak levels by 2030. This isn’t about temporary offsets or incremental gains in efficiency—it’s about the rapid adoption of scalable solutions that will work throughout the world to eliminate global net emissions by 2050 and sustain net-negative emissions thereafter. Building this better future will tackle climate change, deliver on environmental justice, and create good jobs. It will give us a shot to stop the planet from continuously warming. It will alleviate the concentrated burdens of fossil fuel pollution, which are concentrated in systemically disadvantaged, often majority Black and brown communities. It will empower American workers to compete in the global clean energy economy of the 21st century. There is no time to lose in the work of building a clean energy future.

## 3

#### The meta-ethic is practical reason—

#### [1] Inescapability— I can question why to follow or the validity of an ethical theory, which concedes the authority of reason as if I question reason, I use reason to question. Outweighs on validity—any other truth risks falsity Reality may be fake, our experiences may be arbitrary, and experience may be descriptive not normative, but questioning the validity of reason requires reason, conceding its validity. Any other ethic begs the question of why, meaning it’s arbitrary and nonbinding

#### [2] Action theory— Only reason can explain why we take transitional action to an overall end. For example, setting the end of tea provides me a reason to unify the necessary actions to produce tea, like getting a pot, filling it with water, etc. Any other explanation fails since it can’t give meaning to why we take transitioning action – freezing action. 2 Impacts—

#### [a] That’s a side constraint on the AC—ethics is a guide to action so it must appeal to a structure of action.

#### [b] Bindingness—reason is intrinsic to actions since only it can provide value to transitioning action, which justifies universality

#### That justifies universality—

#### If we are all reasoners, we must all be able to determine if an action is good. An action that maximizes my freedom at the cost of others then would have to be recognized as good by everyone, but that leads to a contradiction where everyone takes other’s freedoms to maximize theirs, making it impossible to reach my end

#### Thus, the standard is respecting a system of inner and outer freedom

## Case

### ‘United States’

#### PLAN FLAW— the “United States” is a meaningless term

The United States cannot recognize anything, though the United States Federal Government can.

#### Drop them – losing is a reflective process that teaches them better plan writing

## Framing

**Util Indicts**

1. **Problem of induction—I predict based on past experiences, but there’s no justification for why those past experiences are true besides they worked in the past, which is based on experiences and is circular**
2. **Infinite consequences—each action has a consequence which leads to another consequence—if I drop a pen, that could lead to a hurricane so there is no consequence that can be predicted**
3. **What if we are in a simulation or dream or our experiences are controlled by monsters? Experience may not be valid**
4. **Pain and pleasure arbitrary and not a stasis point—people have different interps on whether 3 headaches or a migraine is worse**
5. **Util relies on internalism, which has no bindingness since I could say I did an action because I didn’t know that the result would be bad since no one knows my experiences**
6. **Util triggers skep—if our bodies naturally know pain is bad and pleasure is good, we automatically act off pain and pleasure ie I automatically remove my hand from a hot stove bc receptors unconsciously trigger my hand to move—means we don’t have control over action and there can’t be moral prescription**

### Solvency

#### The plan doesn’t work and sucks – farmers replace laborers, family farms are excluded, causes massive yield losses, decrease in labor needs mean plan isn’t necessary, throws farms out of business, kills productivity

Reilly, 11, Penn State Law, “Agricultural Laborers: Their Inability to Unionize Under the National Labor Relations Act”, Penn State: Masters of Science, JD Law, URL: <https://pennstatelaw.psu.edu/_file/aglaw/Publications_Library/Agricultural_Laborers.pdf>, 2011 + since most recent citation is from then, KR

There are many obstacles that stand in the way of agricultural laborers being protected under the NLRA. First, agricultural laborers face strong competition from other workers who are willing to perform the difficult field labor for less money. For example, immigrants do not always require the same wage rate as American citizens.66 The competition from immigrants will be a difficult obstacle to overcome before allowing agricultural laborers the ability to unionize under the NLRA because of the agricultural exemption to the Immigrant Reform Control Act (IRCA). 67 There is also the issue of illegal immigrants who work in the agricultural sector because of the ease with which an undocumented worker may obtain fake documents. Also, an illegal immigrant can present false documents to gain employment, a practice followed by many agricultural growers and producers because of the lower wage rate that these workers are willing to work for compared to American citizens.68 These workers are able to obtain work even though IRCA requires employers to authenticate all employees’ documentation verifying their authorization to work in the United States because IRCA has a relaxed standard that as long as a document appears to be “reasonably genuine on its face” then the employer is able to hire the employee based on the false documents.69 Another source of competition for work in the agricultural sector comes from convicts who, again, are willing to work for lower wages for performing work in agricultural fields.70 This competition to procure agricultural work would make it difficult for agricultural laborers to unionize under the NLRA because agricultural laborers and organizers would have to be able to overcome other federal statutes and state and local laws. The policies currently in place do not make farm labor a significant cost of food production, as it would potentially be if unions were negotiating for the wage rates of agricultural laborers. Another hurdle to gaining inclusion under the NLRA for agricultural laborers is the potential opposition the movement can face from those laborers working in a state that provides protection for agricultural labor unions under state law.71 A few states have enacted laws offering protection to agricultural laborers, and if these agricultural laborers were then to be included under federal law, most of the rights already acquired and fought for under state law would be lost.72 While protection under the NLRA would certainly be able to protect more workers than any state law can, it is still an obstacle that labor advocates would need to overcome before including agricultural laborers in the definition of “employee” under the NLRA. Those opposing agricultural laborers inclusion under the NLRA may point to the fact that there are still family farms unable to meet union demands. This was a concern when the NLRA was first enacted, possibly leading to agriculture’s exclusion under the act, and is still a concern today. Family farms are still very prevalent in the agricultural industry, accounting for ninety-eight percent of the farms in the United States.73 Of those family farms, roughly ninety percent are small family farms with a market share of just under twenty-five percent.74 The operators of these smaller farms do have a serious concern about bargaining with unions and the higher cost of labor associated with unionization. Looking to other federal statutes, however, it is safe to assume that small family farms will still be excluded under the NLRA. Both the Migrant and Seasonal Workers Protection Act (MSWPA)75 and the FLSA have exclusions for family farms76 and small agricultural business.77 Both of these acts provide for an exemption for agricultural employers whose employees did not work a certain number of man-days78 in a calendar year.79 Based on the exclusion under these two statutes for small agricultural businesses and family farms, it logically follows that were agricultural laborers to be included in the definition of employee under the NLRA and able to unionize that the same exclusion found under the MSWPA and the FLSA would also be part of the NLRA. Given that the definition of agriculture in the FLSA is incorporated into the NLRA, it is reasonable to assume that the agricultural exemption for family farms and small businesses found in the FLSA would also be incorporated into the NLRA if its coverage were extended to agricultural laborers. D. Opposition to the NLRA being applied to agricultural laborers While there may be many advantages to agricultural workers being able to unionize under the NLRA, many farmers strongly oppose the idea. Under the NLRA, unions are able to utilize economic weapons to forcefully persuade employers during negotiations or during the course of a collective bargaining agreement, if one is in existence between a union and an employer, 80 and farmers do not want to have their 21 workers being able to put such economic weapons to use, especially the right to strike. 81 Striking during harvest season could have detrimental economic effects on farmers whose crops are perishable and not harvested at the right time. 82 Strikes are not always successful, but when they are, they can have a significant effect on the employer’s production level and the profits that the employer will receive for his or her product.83 A farmer’s business could be greatly impacted by the presence of a union especially if disputes arise around harvest season. Farmers have a relatively short time period in which to harvest their crops and if their crops are not harvested at the right time, a farmer may lose a significant profit. This adverse economic effect is one of the main arguments farmers advance to oppose agricultural laborers inclusion under the NLRA. Another reason to oppose the unionization of agricultural laborers is that labor is already a great expense for farmers and with the introduction of unions and a raise in the hourly rate of pay for agricultural laborers both farmers and consumers would face harmful economic realities. The more a farmer will have to spend on labor, the more money the public will be charged for that product. Currently, farmers and grocery retailers alike are able to charge reasonable prices to the public because of the labor system currently in place.84 If unions request a substantial increase in the hourly rate paid to agricultural laborers, consumers would have to be charged more to help farmers pay their workers. Because food production impacts the nation, farmers have an interest in keeping food prices down for the good of the general public that needs food to survive. Also, paying extensive wages can cause some farms to go out of business. Not all farms are large-scale operations and if wages for agricultural laborers increase significantly, it is unlikely that production will continue to be a viable source of income for the smaller farms that still need to employ laborers to work in the fields.85 Some agricultural production facilities are also seeing a decrease in the amount of agricultural labor needed to carry out operations. For example, many animal farming operations are merging which is leading to fewer farms maintaining the same production levels as fifty years ago, which leads to a reduction in the amount of labor needed at those farms. 86 Laborers working on animal farming operations may not need protection if there are fewer workers required for production. If one segment of an industry is not in need of protection, there is no reason to extend a federal statute to an entire industry if the industry is shrinking. Indeed, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected that between 2008 and 2018 the agricultural industry will see little or no change in the amount of agricultural laborers needed, with an expected decrease in the number of workers needed by 2018. 87 If there are less people in need of federal protection than there were fifty years ago, or even when the NLRA was first enacted, there may be a concern about why such federal protection would be necessary if there is a decrease in the number of workers that would benefit from such protection. Why should agricultural laborers be able to unionize if there is no longer as great of a need for such laborers? Indeed, if the industrialization of animal farming is causing a decrease in the demand for labor, it follows that the technological advances made to benefit other types of agricultural operations would likewise lead to a decrease in the amount of labor necessary to maintain current farm productivity levels. In forming unions, agricultural laborers would not be seeking to bargain with agricultural producers, but with farm labor contractors who exploit these laborers and perpetuate the low earnings prevalent among this group of workers. Farmers many times will hire farm labor contractors to supply laborers to work the farm. 88 Therefore, it is the labor contractor who hires, fires, and supervises the agricultural laborers and they are the ones to actually employ the laborers.89 Farm labor contractors are also in charge of distributing wages not farmers. 90 The only costs these contractors incur are labor costs, or the wages they pay to the agricultural laborers for their time in the farmer’s field. Labor contractors are able to maximize their own profits by not paying the agricultural laborers a fair wage for their work. 91 Agricultural laborers should maintain their exclusion from the NLRA because allowing agricultural laborers to bargain with the farm labor contractors would cause great devastation to a farmer’s profit due to the potential increase the farmer would have to pay the labor contractors to supply labor. Essentially, if agricultural laborers were able to unionize and bargain for higher wages with the labor contractors, farmers would be adversely affected because the farmers would have to pay more money to the labor contractors

### Advantage 1

#### [1] Increased wages don’t benefit laborers but put farms at risk of going out of business

Michelle Miller, 21 [Writer at AgDaily, Labor shortages continue to negatively affect agriculture. AGDAILY (6-22-2021) https://www.agdaily.com/insights/labor-shortages-continue-to-negatively-affect-agriculture/]//anop

The average household spends 9.5 percent of their disposable income on food, and food prices have been rising for the past five years. However, for every dollar spent on food, a farmer receives only 7.6 cents. Despite rising food costs, farmers are predicted to lose 9.7 percent of total net income in 2021, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Farmers are facing a difficult challenge with reduced income, more consumer demands, and very notably, reduced labor sources. food-dollar-data The American Farm Bureau Federation estimates there are over 2.4 million farm jobs that need to be filled annually, but there is a drastic decline in available workers year after year. Over 73 percent of farm workers are immigrants, mostly from Mexico and South America, and although the H2-A program has been increasing the number of accepted applications, the 250,000 farm workers it allows into the country each year doesn’t do enough to fill the labor needs. Almost 50 percent of immigrant farm workers do not have legal authorization to work; authorized immigrant workers make up about 20 %percent of farm labor, according to the USDA. Agricultural industries have a difficult time employing workers since wages are an average of only 60 percent of what other industries can offer. Although farm wages have been rising, especially as a result of the H-2A program, which requires pay to be higher than the state/federal minimum wage, farm operators have little wiggle room to pay employees more. Labor already costs fruit and vegetables growers an estimated 25 percent or more of their income; any increase in farm wages means a reduction in the already little income operators receive. Reduced availability in labor and increases in consumer demands have led to production changes. labor-costs-graphic-2016-2018 Consumer pressure to change production practices to be more environmentally friendly, use fewer chemicals, or offer niche market products like organic, non-GMO, or hormone free has also impacted farm income. Often these production practices are more expensive than conventional methods, utilize expensive equipment, or produce less yields and therefore less product to sell. As a response to the decreasing available labor, increasing cost of labor, reduced farm income, and new production methods agriculture has made innovative steps to replace human-based jobs with technology. Labor shortages and financial restraints require innovative growth or risk the loss of a U.S. food system. One major advancement that many food crops are instilling is the use of mechanical harvesting to replace hand labor. Equipment is expensive, however it can be utilized over many growing seasons and often reduces the need for labor to just a handful of people. Artificial intelligence is opening the door to even more developments, such as robotic fruit pickers that work more efficiently than hand labor. Robots and mechanical harvesters don’t require housing, transportation, food, or breaks, and can be operated for as long as they have power. vegebot Image courtesy of the University of Cambridge Fruit and vegetable growers aren’t the only ones employing technology to reduce labor needs. Livestock operations, especially dairies, are utilizing all sorts of devices to limit the need for workers they can’t find. Many dairies are switching to automatic milking machines, which can typically service 50 to 70 cows per day, and automatic calf feeders, which can feed up 120 calves per mixing station. These technologies, although have not always proven profitable in current studies, have the capability to reduce labor needs which solves a major problem. Without the use of these machines or ability to find workers, these dairies would have to close indefinitely. Farm labor, food prices, and new technology are all interconnected when it comes to the future of agriculture in the United States. Solutions to one issue may impact another, sometimes negatively and other times positively.

#### [3] Prefer neg ev – it’s hyperspecific to US circumstances where consumers have more demands causing input costs to be higher and understands intricacies of the NLRA – prefer over empirics because their examples don’t have the same conditions the aff does so they cant be as specific