Proposed Talking Points RE: TN HB 1239 (E-Verify)

\*\* These are pending are complete understanding of what this bill will actually change, other than going from 50 to 25.

General Points

* This bill does not help TN workers. There are bigger issues that working families care about and expect our state representatives to address, such as the lack of enforcement against bad employers who are stealing wages from workers and putting their lives at risk.
* The state should hold employers they contract with to high standards and ensure that workers at those jobs will not face wage theft or even death due to a lack of health and safety regulations.
* The state should be using their resources (time and labor of the chief procurement officer) to hold companies accountable for violating workers’ rights.

Construction Industry Points

* Billions of dollars are spent on development in TN, and there are thousands of construction workers putting their lives at risk to keep up with the demand. [Between 2016 and 2017 alone, 17 workers died on the job](https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/investigations/2018/05/06/nashville-growth-construction-worker-deaths-victims/544661002/). We believe that number is higher and that workers and their families are too afraid to come forward for several reasons, including immigration status and the risk of being blacklisted in the city for future jobs. State legislation such as HB1239 only puts all workers at risk: when some workers are afraid to speak up, it hurts all workers at their workplace.
* Wage theft in the construction industry in TN is rampant. One of the most documented [wage theft cases in recent months is the case of the more of 100 workers who built the JW Marriott Hotel in downtown Nashville working under the General Contractor Skanska](https://www.wsmv.com/news/construction-workers-rally-for-unpaid-wages-outside-marriott/article_b045190a-a3ea-11e8-9c70-9fd83245cab5.html). Skanska then subcontracted two other companies (MR Drywall and First Class Interiors). Combined, those two companies owe the workers $1.6 million. These are the issues that the state legislature needs to address, rather than creating more fear in our communities.