

Good afternoon to everyone here today. My name is Alicia Hernandez and I am a member of Fe y Justicia and I live in St Cloud.

I am an essential worker because I work at the poultry plant, Pilgrims Pride, in Cold Springs.

I am a mother of of 2 kids and work to provide what they need. I want to tell you that I am afraid because it is getting bad with the pandemic again - it was very bad before. We work very close together and there are many of us where I work. There is not enough time to follow all the rules to take care of ourselves and to keep social distance between everything we need to do at the plant.

In my home we all got sick [with COVID] and one of my cousins was gravelly sick. We all work at the same company and there was a time when no one in this house could go to work and many coworkers could not go to work because they were sick. Those who were not sick with COVID had to work double.

That affected us all emotionally, physically, and economically. I could not get all better and stayed sick. I was sick three times and my kids also got sick with COVID. I am grateful we are all living, but am scared we are going backwards to our previous situation.

I want to remind you that many of us in Agriculture and meat plants worked and it is important to include us in the frontline worker pay.