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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Emma Weinstein-Levey
(334) 956-8458/(334) 324-6580
emma.levey@splcenter.org

SPLC: Government Citation of Poultry Plant for Safety Violations Important Step to Protect Worker Health

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – The following statement about the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) citation of a Pilgrim’s Pride poultry plant in Live Oak, Florida, for poor medical evaluation and treatment is by Naomi Tsu, deputy legal director Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), which recently filed two OSHA complaints over conditions at a Farm Fresh Foods poultry plant in Alabama:

“The poultry industry must stop destroying workers’ bodies to make its products. It is no secret that poultry plants rarely provide health care and even actively discourage workers from seeking care to keep injury statistics low. Too often, the only thing these workers can count on after years of service is being fired when they become too injured or disabled to work.

“By issuing the first-ever citation to a poultry plant for failing to refer its injured workers to appropriate medical care, OSHA has taken an important first step to end this dangerous and degrading treatment. The industry should now have a clear understanding of the legal standard they must meet. OSHA must vigorously enforce these worker protections.

“The SPLC, which has investigated the Alabama poultry industry and has worked to protect these workers, will continue to advocate for them until everyone employed in this industry can go to work without fearing for their safety.”

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The Southern Poverty Law Center, based in Alabama with offices in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi, is a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society. For more information, see www.splcenter.org.