



February 4, 2016

Members of the Senate Workforce and General Government Committee,

We are writing in support of SB 1587 to stop wage theft in Oregon. SB 1587 enforces our wage laws that are being violated every day, gives workers more tools to get back the pay they deserve, and builds a foundation for comprehensive wage theft reform in 2017. An important part of this bill is the limited private right of action that is essential to giving workers the justice they deserve.

The Center for Intercultural Organizing is a diverse, grassroots organization working to build a multi-racial, multicultural movement for immigrant and refugee rights. Immigrants and people of color are more vulnerable to wage theft and experience it at higher rates than the general population. It is wrong to shortchange this community of workers who put so much into our economy. Stopping wage theft will give workers the pay they deserve.

SB 1587 gives workers more tools to expose employer wrongdoing by ensuring we have access to wage and hour records including pay stubs. Employers who deny access to such records will be held accountable. The bill also makes it easier for workers to find legal help - an important part of the solution - and reduces barriers to help recover the wages workers are owed. It strengthens enforcement and accountability and provides state agencies with additional tools and resources to enforce existing wage and hour laws and hold excessive and intentional offenders accountable.

We believe that we are strongest when we respect each other, empathize with one another and work together toward justice. We believe that stopping wage theft that, while widespread, often targets immigrants, women and people of color, is an important step to becoming a stronger economy and a more just society.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kayse Jama