



April 10, 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor,

I am writing on behalf of the Fair Shot for All Coalition to express our opposition to HB 3383. I am also concerned that this bill never had a public hearing. Our coalition and Oregonians across the state worked hard during the 2016 session to pass a strong and inclusive minimum wage increase for Oregon workers.

When Oregon lawmakers voted to raise the minimum wage in 2016 with the passage of SB 1532, they gave over 500,000 Oregon workers and their families a fair shot at economic security and stability. It's made a significant difference: More than 100,000 hardworking Oregonians received a raise in July 2016. In a matter of years, another 500,000 Oregonians will see an increase in their wages and a fair shot at a better life.

It is important that we don't go back. Oregon's minimum wage law strongly affirms that all Oregonians deserve to be paid a decent wage, no matter where they live, how old they are, or what job they do. Any rollback or change to our minimum wage policy would directly and disproportionately impact workers of color, farmworkers, and young workers. In particular HB 3383 targets the agricultural industry. Farmworkers are the lowest-paid workers in America. According to the National Agricultural Workers Survey, 30% of all farmworkers have total family incomes below the poverty line. Yet Oregon agriculture continues to improve, topping \$6 billion in total gate sales.

Our concern is that House Bill 3383 would give an incentive to employ workers at low wages without benefits. By targeting tax credits toward the low wage employees, this appears to give a reward for employing workers at the bare minimum. We are not certain that this will result in the needed economic lift that many Oregonians require to get ahead.

Raising the minimum wage gave more Oregonians a fair shot to get ahead and strengthened our local economy. Putting more money in the pockets of consumers powers our local economy and will help small businesses grow. Research shows that the costs of minimum wage increases are absorbed through reduced worker turnover and improved worker performance.

Additionally, raising the minimum wage has been a better use of taxpayer dollars. Many Oregonians want to support their families without public assistance. They'd gladly leave government subsidies behind for a higher wage, full-time work and jobs that are in sync with the needs of working families. The money that taxpayers have spent on subsidizing low-wage work in Oregon is much better spent on educating our kids, rebuilding roads and bridges and providing access to health care—priorities that also help successful small business growth in our state.



ABOUT FAIR SHOT FOR ALL

Fair Shot for All is a united movement of more than 30 racial justice organizations, community groups and labor unions fighting together for racial, gender and economic justice. Our priorities tackle critical barriers to safety, health and security and continue our fight to secure a fair shot for every Oregonian. We are standing up for women, people of color, LGBTQ communities, immigrants and working families. Together, we are sending a message loud and clear: every Oregonian needs real opportunity and a fair shot at a secure future.

Fair Shot for All includes AFT Oregon, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Basic Rights Oregon, Bus Project, Causa Oregon, Coalition of Communities of Color, Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), Family Forward Oregon, Forward Together, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, Northwest Workers' Justice Project, Oregon AFL-CIO, Oregon AFSCME, Oregon Education Association, Oregon Latino Health Coalition (OLHC), Oregon National Organization for Women, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Student Association, Partnership for Safety and Justice, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, Portland Jobs with Justice, Rural Organizing Project, Sankofa Collective Northwest, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), Unite Oregon, Urban League of Portland, Voz Workers' Rights Education Project, and the YWCA.