



Oregon's Farmworker Union

April 17, 2019

To: Joint Committee on Transportation

RE: House Bill 2015: Equal Access to Roads Act

Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

On behalf of our 6,543 member, PCUN would like to express strong support for HB 2015, the Equal Access to Roads Act.

PCUN represents the backbone of Oregon's agriculture economy - farmworkers. Our farmworkers and low wage Latinx families are an integral part in our communities. In Oregon, there are about 87,000 farmworkers; about 20% are women according to national data.¹ Farmworkers play an integral part of Oregon's economy. According to this [USDA Economic Research Service data table](#), total hired labor compensation was just over \$1 billion in 2017, Agriculture in Oregon's has a total market value of \$4.8 billion dollars in Oregon, which of course relies on the labor of farmworkers, and the agricultural sector.

The ability to drive legally continues to be a core everyday need for many farmworker Oregon families, especially in rural, agricultural communities. Farmworkers and low wage Latino workers take their kids to school, drive to work and take care of family and neighbors in need.

Many farmworker families must often go above and beyond to plan their lives around transportation availability. Many of our workers spend at least \$40 a week carpooling, taking away from an already low wage. Other rely on friends and family members. The lack of access to legally drive adds a unnecessary stress and barriers for families that are already trying their very best to survive. Maria Erika Guevara, a longtime community member of Woodburn is personally affected by driver license and would like to see a change in Oregon policies. One of the strongest values in her family is education and as such, she is highly involved in her children's education as a volunteer. She is able to volunteer by presenting her expired driver license ID.

However, she knows multiple parents who are not able to volunteer in their children's educational activities because they do not have an ID. Their kids don't understand why they can't go with them to field trips and often ask, "why can't you?". The lack of driver license affects entire communities, our children and their well being.

¹ Larson, Alice. "Oregon Update Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Enumeration Profiles Study". (2013): 38

HB 2015 is a common sense solution. Requiring all drivers, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, to pass a written safety exam and driver's test and provide proof of identity and insurance makes Oregon roads and communities safer for everyone.

PCUN respectfully urges the committee to support HB 2015.

Thank you,

Reyna Lopez
Executive Director, PCUN