

March 1, 2021

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Daysi Bedolla, Organizing Director at PCUN's Oregon's Farmworker Union. PCUN has served this community for more than 3 decades by advocating for farmworker and Latinx working families' rights. This past year given the pandemic has been very challenging for our community members.

One of our main concerns is that Latinx communities make up 13 percent of Oregon's population - and yet, throughout that pandemic have made up between 30-40 percent of the COVID-19 cases.

Also, BIPOC communities have some of the highest death rates due to COVID-19. High infection rates are because the essential industries during the pandemic - especially those that are low-wage, highly labor-intensive, with no possibility of working remotely, and logistically difficult to be socially distanced - employ high rates of Latinx, BIPOC, and immigrant communities. As coronavirus hit our doors this past year, our farmworkers have had to face higher challenges in their work, lives, and health. The majority of our farmworkers had to choose between paying for a roof over their head or exposing themselves every single day to this virus.

As someone who has worked very closely responding with PPE, and covid-19 education, I have witnessed many cases where the temporary protection rules have not worked nor been followed. We know of cases where folks have been asked to take off their face masks because they don't "need it", or asked to take their gloves because it will "damage" the fruit. We know of other cases where farmworkers have not received PPE, or water until they asked. Other instances were face coverings being sold to them for 5 dollars, and folks not being able to protect themselves because they could not afford it.

This is a harsh reality that our farmworkers continue to live day by day amid the pandemic, wildfires, storms, and many other emergencies that have arisen in the last year. The reality is there are not enough rules that can protect their health, their well-being, and their families.

As we move into the vaccination phase for these workers we have concerns of accessibility and ask the state, the committee, and other agencies to consider having a plan of distribution that includes: (1) multilingual outreach, including indigenous languages. (2) Partnerships with community-based organizations, faith organizations, businesses, other associations to ensure trusted groups get the message out. (3) Privacy and data protection, especially for agricultural workers without documentation status. (4) a clear, proactive, and dedicated plan for vaccine

delivery to rural communities, including making vaccines, and testing available at labor housing.
(5) Diverse, ample, and accessible in as many locations as possible - including places where agricultural workers feel comfortable going.

I would like to lastly say, that PCUN is committed to continuing the advocacy to protect our farmworkers and our Latinx working families. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. We look forward to advocating for the health of all Oregonians including those who are constantly forgotten.