

March 6, 2021

To the Honorable Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Grayber, and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee,

My name is Vanessa and I am a community member, seasonal farmworker, and a first-generation university student. I am writing in support of HB 2358, farmworker overtime pay.

Before entering my Sophomore year of college I spent my entire summer working three jobs so that I could pay for my apartment rent in the fall. Two of three jobs that I worked in were full-time positions in agriculture mainly in nurseries and harvesting blueberries, cherries, and grapes across Salem and Silverton areas both by hourly and piece-rate pay.

Working from sunrise to sundown was a painful experience that I will never forget especially after working 80+ hours per week in the fields. Unfortunately, every hour after my 40 hour work week was paid at a regular wage ranging from \$11.50 to \$12.50. Had I been paid overtime, I could have avoided the physical and mental burnout before returning to school but earning money was crucial for me to continue my studies.

The most stressful part of my experience is that at the end of the summer I hardly earned enough to cover my rent alone-- I still needed money for food and textbooks throughout the year.

Stories like mine are not unique, Oregon students like myself work multiple jobs in agriculture to stay afloat. More importantly, entire families rely solely on their earned income from farm labor. I urge you to be diligent and see past the term “farmworker,” *understand that we are people just like any other person in any other workforce who equally require overtime pay*. Understand that the oppression and displacement of farmworkers is deeply rooted in the racist history of our state. Vote “YES” on HB 2358.

Thank you.