



March 8, 2021

Dear Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Grayber, Members of the Committee,

My name is Jeanine Morales, on behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, we would like to provide the following support for HB 2358. At NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, our advocacy is centered on defending and expanding access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care, including an equity-focused approach to increasing healthy pregnancy outcomes and ensuring all families can thrive. We believe that everyone in Oregon must have access to a safe environment in which they can raise their families. We also understand that we cannot achieve reproductive equity or justice until all communities are protected from exploitation. When workers are not adequately compensated, or subject to wage theft of overtime payments, many people who can become pregnant are unable to access health care and other necessary resources to care for their families. We urge you to support the dignity and health of farmworker families by voting in favor of HB 2358.

Farmworkers continue to be impacted by the legacy of the discriminatory Federal Labor Standards Act of 1938¹, which excluded agricultural workers from overtime payment. Farmworkers experience poverty at a higher rate than other salary and hourly workers in Oregon, thus making it beyond difficult to support and provide for a family.² Supporting HB 2358 guarantees overtime pay to agricultural workers after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. Many workers and their families do not have healthcare coverage through their employer. As a result, migrant and seasonal farmworkers experience higher rates of serious health concerns, including COVID-19.

Guaranteeing farmworkers overtime pay will positively impact Oregonians positively by guaranteeing families a decent standard of living, **thus creating economic stability to a class of workers who have been excluded from basic labor standards such as minimum wage, collective bargaining rights, and overtime pay.**

During the time of COVID-19, with better wages, there will be an increase in consumer spending, especially in local businesses and rural communities. We urge you to vote yes on HB 2358 to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are adequately paid for their labor.

Sincerely,

Jeanine Morales
Deputy Director, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon

¹Farm Workers and the Fair Labor Standards Act: Racial Discrimination in the New Deal
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2205898

² National Farm Worker Ministry: Low Wages <http://nfwm.org/farm-workers/farm-worker-issues/low-wages/>