

To: Chair Holvey, Vice Chairs Grayber and Bonham, and members of the Committee on Business and Labor

Re: HB 2358 Farmworker Overtime

My name is Laura Bennett,

I am writing to ask for the support of HB 2358 for Farmworker Overtime Pay in the state of Oregon. It is now common knowledge that in the history of labor movements in our country, when workers were demanding fair working conditions (the 40-hr work week, overtime pay, etc.), the only reason that both farmworkers and domestic workers were excluded were because at the time the majority of people in those positions were people of color, predominately Black Americans who were once slaves or the descendents of slaves. This exclusion was a way to keep people without the same rights as the rest of us. Although the demographics of farmworkers has changed, the structural racism remains just the same. I have been working alongside farmworkers out in the field for the last five years, and as an Oregonian myself, knowing Oregon's specific history of exclusion laws, this would be a major move to take action to uproot racism from our state's agricultural institutions. Real people suffer from this every day, and we have the power to change it. This is absolutely necessary to build the better world that we all deserve, and to actually take care of the people who grow the food that we use to feed and care for our families. Thank you for your time and consideration.