



February 5, 2022

Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of farmworker overtime. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Deputy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color, an alliance of culturally specific community-based organizations dedicated to cross-cultural collective action for racial justice.

All workers should be treated with dignity and respect for their labor. That means everyone should be paid fairly for the time that they work, including the farmworkers who harvest our food and make agriculture in Oregon possible. The unjust exclusion of farmworkers from our state and federal overtime laws has no place in Oregon today, and farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. Farmworkers were deliberately excluded from the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938's overtime provisions, a racially targeted policy. Today, most farmworkers identify as Latinx or Indigenous, and it's time to rectify this racial economic injustice and value farm labor equally.

Agricultural work is physically demanding, requires speed and dexterity, and exposes workers to the elements, including extreme heat and other dangers. Overtime pay protections help create better health conditions and give farmworkers time to take care of themselves and their families outside of work. Despite the long hours and intensity of their work—and the importance to Oregon's economy—farmworkers are some of the lowest paid workers in Oregon and deserve a living wage. There is no justification to treat farmworkers as deserving of lesser rights than any other workers. By rightfully requiring overtime pay for farmworkers, we can help farmworkers and their families live better lives.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I urge you to farmworker overtime so that farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential labor.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Lee', is written over the typed name.

Jenny Lee
Deputy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color