

Submitter: Lucy Hitchcock

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

I am writing in support of the intent of SB 4002 to require that farmworkers in Oregon be paid overtime pay (after 40 hours of work) at 1 ½ times their regular hourly wage. Long over do, this should be implemented as soon as possible.

It is past time for the farmworkers who harvest our food, often in trying physical conditions, to be paid a living wage with fair compensation for their overtime hours. They are essential workers who deserve safe working conditions, housing, medical care, education, ample food and water for themselves and their families.

Agriculture depends often on immigrant workers seeking a livelihood they may not find in their home countries, with climate change now reducing good farming conditions especially in southern climes. It is important that our laws not discriminate against foreign, often itinerant, agricultural workers so important for our orchards, fields and livestock, cultivation, harvest and preparation for sale.

If voters and government are unwilling to see the cost of fair wages passed on to customers, then the government must make up the increase. Farmworkers deserve to be paid and receive the benefits of other working Americans. Anything less is a travesty and a national embarrassment.

May Oregon be a positive example of just labor conditions we can be proud of.