



Date: February 7, 2022  
To: House Committee on Business and Labor  
From: Ames Kessler, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of farmworker overtime. My name is Ames Kessler and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon (PHFO). PHFO is a statewide anti-poverty advocacy organization with a small staff of under 15 members. We understand that leadership comes from those with lived experience and that hunger and poverty do not exist on their own, but rather a result of overlapping systems of oppression that create layers of privilege and inequity. Our values and work are centered in creating systemic changes to end hunger.

PHFO believes that farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. We know that exclusion of overtime pay negatively impacts health, wellness, and quality of life. Before 1938, employers overworked workers even to the point of death. Extending overtime pay protections to farmworkers will create better health conditions and a longer life for farmworkers. Overtime pay would also give farmworkers more time outside of work, allowing them to spend more time with their families or tend to other responsibilities, instead of spending most of their life at work.

At Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, we do not seek to just feed our neighbors, we seek our shared liberation from systems of oppression, such as racism, classism, cissexism and other forms of violence, which will allow all to thrive. We believe every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity. This is why we urge you to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential labor.

Sincerely,

Ames Kessler  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon