

02/08/2022

Milka Mendez

Ciudad: Forest Grove

Re: Support-HB 4002

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

My name is Milka Mendez, I live in Forest Grove, Washington County. I am writing in strong support for HB 4002 overtime pay for farmworkers. Like you and thousands of other Oregonians, I wake up every day knowing that I will go to work, for me work is very pleasant, well paid, with good benefits and in a safe and healthy environment, but unfortunately for others it is poorly paid, without benefits, and unsafe conditions. This is the case for farmworkers, which is why I am here today to defend their rights. They are essential workers who work very long hours regardless of inclement weather and often 7 days a week to put food on your table and mine. I value and admire the work that farmworkers do in the fields of the ranchers but I regret that for years they have been denied the right to pay overtime. I reiterate my support for HB 4002 because history does not lie and I know that this sector has been excluded from this benefit based on discriminatory laws.

Enough, we all deserve to be treated equally and fairly. Representatives, I implore you to carefully analyze all the benefits that the provision will have on the agricultural sector and when you make your decisions, do so by putting yourself in the shoes of a farmworker. Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Grayber and members of the House Business and Labor Committee, if this law passes you would give my family, friends, and community the opportunity to increase their income and in this way, they could live a better quality of life, they could pay for better health care, they could access better quality housing and even save a little to be able to take their family on vacation at least once in a while.

Dear representatives, many of us shout to the world that we are in a country full of possibilities, that we fight for justice and equality, and today many farmworkers are waiting for the approval of HB 4002 and being able to celebrate that they will soon begin to receive fair pay for their work. Thank you for your attention, I urge you to support farmworker overtime pay after 40 hours. Farmworkers deserve to live a dignified life and to not be discriminated against.

*Milka Mendez*

*Forest Grove*