

Date: February 7, 2022
To: House Committee on Business and Labor
From: OR Farmworker
Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

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

I am a farmworker who lives in Umatilla, OR. I have lived in the state of Oregon as a farmworker for more than 36 years. In the last 14 years I have worked in the wine industry. Currently, I have been tasked with pruning the grape vines in the vineyards. I am writing to you today in support of farmworker overtime. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

During these winter months, we continue to work in extremely cold temperatures. Although we do not work more than 40 hours at this time due to the cold weather, we do during the harvest season. In a good week, we work more than 50 hours. We have never been paid for those extra hours to this day. Farmworkers deserve a living wage to pay for their living expenses. Farmworkers are some of the lowest paid workers in Oregon with a median income of \$28,000 a year.

Receiving Overtime pay would greatly impact my me and my family. We would finally be able to start saving money for to buy our very own house instead of having to throw money away in rent. If I were to earn more for our family, we could save enough money so we don't have to worry about emergency spending. Thank god none of us have had to go to the hospital, but it can happen and we would not be okay. We shouldn't have to worry about how we will put food on our table, we make enough money to do so. Also, on days when inclement weather doesn't allow us to work, it would be nice to have some money saved because they don't pay us when they stop work for the day. Sometimes we work and continue for an hour and then get sent home with only one hour paid. We deserve the benefit of having Overtime hours paid so that we can save for these kinds of days. Farmworkers are not second class workers and deserve the same rights as the rest of the workers.

I 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,

Farm Worker
Umatilla, OR