

Submitter: Cindy Quale

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Oregon's food production and distribution system is anchored by migrant and seasonal agricultural workers, yet these essential workers are excluded from overtime pay. I believe that farmworkers deserve to be treated the same as all other workers. Extending overtime pay for Oregon's farmworkers is necessary to improve their economic security and decrease food insecurity. Throughout the pandemic, catastrophic fires and hazardous air quality levels, farmworkers continued to work to support Oregon's multibillion dollar agricultural industry and keep our food systems afloat. Oregon is behind other states in providing protections and overtime pay to the essential migrant and seasonal workers that our food system depends on. We need to pass Farmworker Overtime so we can all emerge stronger. The basis for not paying farmworkers overtime originated in racism. In 1938 when overtime pay legislation was being developed the push by white growers in the south was to leave farmworkers out of the bill because they were mostly Blacks in the south. We need to recognize that not paying farmworkers for overtime pay is based on racism and we need to correct this harm. In addition farmworkers have been essential workers during the pandemic risking their lives so we can continue to have healthy food. They need enough money to buy the healthy food that they harvest. We should reward them for their efforts during this horrific pandemic. With the fund that is part of this bill to support farmers paying more money for overtime work I do not see any impediment to passing this bill ASAP. We are behind California and Washington in this matter. Time for us to catch up! Sincerely, Cindy Quale Portland, Oregon