

Submitter: Nia Lopez-Salmons
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor
Measure: HB4002

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

My name is Nia Lopez-Salmons and I am a resident of Salem, Oregon. I attend school at Willamette University and my interests and studies are Women & Gender studies and sociology. I come from a lineage of farmworkers and this history is crucial to my family. My grandmother's parents were farm workers and lots of my stories growing up were hearing about her history growing up on a farm and the stories of her father's work. When I envision my family and our position to now go to university is due to the hard work that my ancestors put in on the fields. While my family is from California, we have seen progress towards inclusive working principles for farmworkers already, I am hoping to see this same respect for farmworkers in Oregon!

As the issue of farmworker overtime is brought up in this short session, I believe that this is a perfect opportunity for Oregon to evaluate its priorities of who is deemed an essential worker throughout COVID-19. Farmworkers have worked throughout wildfires and a respiratory virus pandemic. These are workers who deserve our full support and deserve payment for the time they put in. Treating farmworkers as essential would be implementing overtime pay.

It is crucial to evaluate the racist models of capitalism that Oregon upholds and make sure we do not exploit our workers any longer.

Sincerely,
Nia Lopez-Salmons
Student at Willamette University
Salem, OR Resident