

Submitter: Lauren Meekins

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

My name is Lauren Meekins and I live in Jacksonville, Oregon. I currently attend Willamette University. I am writing this in support of the overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one-half times employee regular rate of pay. This is an immediate and pressing issue, and I put neutral to draw attention to this. Farmworkers have been historically excluded from the rights that other workers enjoy. This bill is about bridging this gap, and giving farmworkers long overdue economic security, and peace of mind regarding their own health and wellness.

Other states including Washington and California have already committed to overtime laws, and in order for Oregon to remain competitive in the agricultural industry with such states, we need to follow suit and treat our farmworkers better. These essential workers have been working in extreme conditions, including various weather related issues, like extreme heat which can lead to illness, as well as a global pandemic. We need to stand up and take action for those that have supported our agricultural systems through these hard times, and who work in a dangerous sector so that we may have the food and materials we need. This is not just the moral thing to do, but a necessary move to maintain the workforce needed for such an important industry.