

Date: February 8th, 2021
To: House Committee on Business and Labor
From: **Riley Martin**
Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime,

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

My name is Riley Martin, I attend University in Salem, Oregon.

I am writing to you today in support of farm worker overtime. Farm workers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

Historically and currently, farm workers have been overworked to the point of great physical illness and loss. If overtime pay protections to farm workers are to be extended, it would greatly improve health conditions and the quality of life for these workers. These protections will allow farm workers to spend more time with their families and allow them essential time to recharge and take care of other responsibilities outside of work. Continuing to pay farm workers below a living wage would also have consequences for the economy. Currently, farm workers are among some of the lowest paid workers in the state of Oregon. If employers continue to pay mealy wages to our farm workers, they will seek work in states where they will receive higher compensation for their hard work. Aside from this economic incentive, Oregon farm workers should be able to more comfortably pay for their living expenses and support themselves and their families. For decades, farm workers have been excluded from minimum wage protections child labor laws, and overtime pay. Like any other workers, farm workers deserve labor protections and proper compensation. The treatment of these workers should reflect the hard labor they endure.

I urge you to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure that farm workers in Oregon are fairly compensated for their skilled and essential labor. Additionally, I encourage you to pass this legislation with urgency; five years is far too long to implement this. Not only is the passage of this legislation morally significant and humane, it is also essential to the Oregon economy.

Sincerely,
Riley Martin
Student, Salem, Oregon