



Date: February 9th, 2022
To: House Committee on Business and Labor
From: Laura Stevens, Sierra Club
Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

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

I am writing on behalf of the Sierra Club Oregon Chapter in support of farmworker overtime. It is unconscionable that the people who work so hard to keep Oregonians fed, aren't already included in overtime requirements. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

The Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club represents around 20,000 dues paying members in the state. We work side by side with our partners like PCUN and Causa to advocate for an Oregon where all residents have access to clean air, clean water, and a stable climate, regardless of their race, country of origin, or language that they prefer to speak. Unfortunately, communities of color, immigrants, and people who prefer to speak Spanish or a language other than English, are the communities who experience the worst environmental pollution. Their leadership in identifying problems and shaping solutions to environmental injustices is absolutely critical. Without our partnerships, Sierra Club might risk advocating for environmental protections that benefit mainly privileged communities, which would be a great disservice towards the goal of a healthy environment for all Oregonians.

Our ability to partner with farmworker organizations is dependent on their membership having the ability to participate in the democratic process. It takes free time and energy to write a letter to an elected official, or attend a public hearing. Exclusion from overtime pay requires farmworkers to work many hours without having time to do other things. Overtime pay would give farmworkers more time outside of work. Overtime pay would allow farmworkers more ability to engage in the democratic process and elevate environmental concerns.

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,

Laura Stevens
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