

Dear Co-Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Joint Committee on Farmworker Overtime,

My name is Inle Gonzalez and I am a Freshman studying Social Work, Child Youth Family Studies, and Chicano Latino Studies at Portland State University and a member of the Oregon Student Association. Before I begin, I would like to honor the Indigenous people whose sacred lands we stand on. The Multnomah, Katlemt, Clackamas, Tumwater, Watlala bands of the Chinook, the Tualatin Kalapuya, and many other indigenous nations of the Columbia River throughout the state of Oregon.

I am writing in support of farmworker overtime pay. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. These farmworkers being the same ones that keep you alive by supplying food on your plate deserve at minimum, the dignity, and respect as any other occupation. For far too long, Farmworkers have been treated inhumanely. As we look across the state, agricultural areas such as Hermiston, Umatilla, Boardman, Woodburn, and Hillsboro to name a few have a large population consistent with the Latinx community, many of them being agricultural workers. Over time, these farmworkers have faced injustices in regard to their health and wellness. During World War 1, the demand for Mexican labor increased parallel to the demand for agricultural production. Before the year of 1938, employers would work these agricultural workers to the point of death and as we continue to be impacted by climate change, deaths within the agricultural field are becoming more prevalent than ever.

In my experience, my family and community come from a long history of farmworkers. As my mom describes it "trabajamos sol a sol," we work sunrise to sunset. When I look down upon the hands of my family members there is blood, sweat, and sacrifice within their work to supply you and your family food and life stands in front of my eyes. This legislation would impact my life and many others by allowing an opportunity to have our family members catch a breath from the work they put in. Our farm workers are working in rigorous positions in order to help their families move forward. This legislation would help by not only finally supporting our agricultural workers with the pay they deserve but provide them with a more secure income for the work they put in. I am passionate about fair pay because we live in a country built by immigrants who are farmworkers. If we plan to move forward as a society we must move all members of our society forward. While many of us are here today listening, many of these agricultural workers are either getting ready for the next workday ahead of them heading home from a long day.

I urge you to join me in supporting farmworker's overtime and House Bill 4002 in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential labor.

Thank you for your time.

Inle Gonzalez