

Submitter: Lauren Herbert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lauren Herbert, MD. I live in Eugene. I am writing in strong support of HB 2548 to create a Farmworker Standards Board in Oregon. I retired as a pediatrician in July 2024; prior to that I worked for decades with children from families of immigrant families, many of whom were farmworkers. I saw how hard the parents worked. I saw how they often could not take time off during the busy farm season to care for their sick children, or to even provide care for their well children. The parents often relied on older siblings of family members to fill in. They often worked without complaints, though I knew their work was very difficult, and that few non-immigrant workers would take these jobs.

In preparing for writing this, I learned that there are over 72,000 Oregon farmworkers, that they contribute over \$6.4B to our state's economy, and that average annual income is \$34,500 annually. Many experience language barriers.

These essential workers deserve a workforce standards board, which HB 2548 would establish. They deserve a voice in establishing industry standards, and deserve a board that would ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and protection from retaliation.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 2548 to create a Farmworker Standards Board and give farmworkers the ability to set standards for the industry.

Sincerely,

Lauren Herbert MD