

Submitter: Catherine Cascade
On Behalf Of: HB 2548
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548

SUBJECT: Yes on HB 2548

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

My name is Catherine Cascade, I live in Eugene and I am writing in strong support of HB 2548 to create a Farmworker Standards Board in Oregon.

There are over 72,000 Oregon farmworkers, who put food on our tables and contribute over \$6.4B to our state's economy, yet they experience poor working conditions and earn an average of just \$34,500 annually. Most farmworkers are immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, and Central America, many of whom speak an Indigenous language.

HB 2548 will give historically excluded workers their first voice in setting industry standards with real enforcement power and accountability. The board will ensure access to fair wages, safe conditions, and protection from retaliation

Cities and states across the country have proven that workforce standards boards work. These boards bring workers together with industry and public representatives to set meaningful standards, with real enforcement power to ensure accountability. From New York's farm laborers to Minnesota's nursing home staff to Seattle's domestic workers, these boards give workers the voice and protections they deserve and give our communities the essential food we need.

While living on a farm myself, I experienced a miscarriage due to exposure to toxic chemicals. No one should ever have to experience the physical and emotional suffering that I did due to occupational exposure.

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,
Catherine Cascade