

TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards  
FROM: Sarah Kowaleski  
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 2548 -2

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

My name is Sarah Kowaleski, I live in Portland, OR and I am a member of CWA Local 7901 writing in strong support of HB 2548 -2 to create a Farmworker Standards Board in Oregon.

There are over 72,000 Oregon farmworkers, who put food on our tables and contribute over \$6.8B 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 -2 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. From New York's farm laborers to Minnesota's nursing home staff to Seattle's domestic workers, these boards give workers the tools to address challenges and improve their industries. A board of workers, issue-area experts, and industry could also more effectively address workforce issues in a timely manner, while freeing capacity in the legislature.

Above all, the center of moral gravity lands on the fact that farmworkers, who are denied the right to organize, deserve a seat at the table - *they are essential!* People of conscience urge you to vote YES on HB 2548 -2 by creating a Farmworker Standards Board.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Kowaleski