



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

To: Chair Grayer, Vice-Chairs Munoz and Elmer, and Members of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards

FR: Tan Perkins, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: Support HB 2548

Date: 03/12/2025

Chair Grayber, Vice-chairs Munoz and Elmer, members of the committee

For the record my name is Tan Perkins with the Oregon AFL-CIO, we represent over 300,000 workers and their families and strive to be a voice for all workers in the legislative process.

I am here today in support of HB 2548 -2. We know that farmworkers are integral to our communities, our state, and put food on our tables. As has been discussed, there has been a long exclusion of agricultural workers from having the same labor rights as other workers. We must ask ourselves if this is fair or right and what we can do to remedy it.

Farmworkers are some of the lowest paid in Oregon, not because their jobs are easy, or because they work short hours, but because there has been a culture set to exploit these workers. We do not think that any worker should ever be treated as if their work is not important or as if they are expendable.

Unions and the right to collectively bargain are important because they protect workers' rights, ensure fair wages, and advocate for improved working conditions. Through negotiations with employers, unions have been able to achieve a 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, minimum wage, paid sick leave, among other protections. Unions give workers a collective voice to address workplace issues that they may not be able to address individually.

HB 2548 -2 is seeking to allow these workers to have the ability to uplift concerns, and fight for a better life. The board encourages strong participation from farmworkers by providing accessibility and accommodations such as closed captioning, translated written materials, language interpretation, and extra time to review meeting materials. Additionally, the board will hold meetings at different locations throughout the state to ensure that they are hearing from all agricultural regions. We recognize the diversity of the agricultural industry and the board's process takes this factor into consideration.



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We know that when workers are taken care of, are making livable wages, have access to healthcare and retirement, that all of us benefit. This standards board would be an impactful first step to having workers in this industry have a real voice in their workplace and make true improvements.

We strongly encourage your support of HB 2548 -2, thank you.

Sincerely,
Tan Perkins, Oregon AFL-CIO