



TO: House Committee on Rules
FROM: Oregon Education Association
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 2548 -7

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing testimony in strong support of HB 2548 -7 to conduct a study on Oregon farmworkers and learn about their experiences at the workplace.

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 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.

Farmworkers and farmworker advocates brought forward a policy to establish a workforce standards board in Oregon. Unfortunately, it is not moving forward this session. While farmworkers and immigrants face attacks from the federal administration, the Oregon legislature has the opportunity to learn about the challenges farmworkers are facing.

HB 2548 -7 will help inform the legislature and the general public about the conditions that farmworkers are facing in the workplace. By funding a study through Portland State University, this bill puts the voices of workers at the center of policymaking while also including the perspectives of farmers. This is how we create lasting, effective change through listening, research, and engagement.

As a union, OEA cares deeply about workers' rights. We also care about the well-being of our students. Farmworkers are essential to feeding families and thus feeding children. The workers who fuel our students, our other workers, and our entire community should have the right to have a say in setting standards for their industry.

OEA strongly urges you to vote YES on HB 2548 with the -7 amendment and invest in Oregon's ability to understand and serve the people who feed our state.

Kevin Sullivan
kevin.sullivan@oregoned.org