



Farmworkers and Latino Working Families United

February 06, 2020

Chair Salinas, Vice-chairs Hayden and Nosse and members of the committee,

My name is Martha Sonato, I am the Political Director at PCUN- Oregon's Farmworker Union. On behalf of PCUN, I would like to provide testimony in support of HB 4115 to ensure our farm worker communities have access to certified and properly trained interpreters.

In Oregon, there are about 87,000 farmworkers; about 20% are women according to national data. Of these farmworkers, about 40% are indigenous and speak almost only indigenous languages. In the Mid-Willamette Valley, we hear languages ranging from Purepecha, to Mixteco and Mayan.

As a farmworker union, we strive to improve and protect the living and working conditions of our communities. Part of this mission includes ensuring that they receive proper medical attention both physically and attentively through medical interpretation. It is important for our communities to have access to high quality healthcare interpretation. HB 4115 would ensure that health care providers work with only OHA approved qualified and certified health care interpreters. Becoming a qualified and certified health care interpreter in Oregon is vital to ensure that people with Limited English Proficiency are provided accurate and effective interpretation services.

Agricultural workers are a vulnerable workforce therefore we must ensure that their medical needs are being heard and accurately understood. This bill would ensure that all patients, regardless of their ability to speak English, receive safe and quality health care.

I thank you for your time and consideration today. PCUN respectfully requests the committee to support HB 4115.

Thank you,

Martha Sonato
Political Director