

I Cristian live in Corvallis, and resident in our state of Oregon.

I am writing in strong support of HB 2358, which extends overtime pay to agricultural workers after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

Currently, farmworkers in Oregon are excluded from overtime pay despite being recognized as essential workers. Farmworkers do one of the harshest jobs yet are some of the lowest paid workers. These workers are more vulnerable to exploitation of their labor and experience economic hardship. The current pandemic has highlighted the crucial role agriculture workers have in our society.

As a former farmworker (picker) and an alumni from Oregon State University; where I obtained a Bachelors in Public Health and MPH with a concentration in environmental and occupation health - I can attest that low wages and poor working conditions are the leading cause for the poor quality of life for farmworkers. Exploitation like low wages and poor working conditions lead to health issues such as: an increase in mental health problems for every member of the family, increase in cardiovascular disease, and malnutrition -just to name a few. Additionally, the children of farmworkers are burden by the fact that parents are not able to afford basic necessities such as materials for school, pay for tutors, pay for wifi that can support more than five devices.

This acts is more then just paying farmworkers a few more dollars. The action of this act will trickle down and impact different facets of the farmworkers life. Other states have recognized this and have taken action to pass similar policies, we must do the same.