

Aurora Martinez  
Woodburn, Oregon  
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Attn: Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield; Vice Co-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith; and members of Oregon's Joint Committee on Ways & Means

I am writing to you today in response to your calls for equity-based policies. As members of Oregon's Ways & Means Committee, I am calling on you to support HB 2819, and continued investment in the Worker Relief Fund. These are all priority items in *The People's Budget*.

The Oregon Worker Relief Fund provides financial support directly to Oregonians who have lost their jobs yet are ineligible for Unemployment Insurance and federal stimulus relief due to their immigration status, and now face hunger, homelessness, and economic hardship. Fully funding the Oregon Worker Relief Fund would give direct support to workers who need access to a financial safety net now.

We also ask you to support HB 2819 because all workers no matter their place of origin should be able to earn enough to care for their families.

- HB 2819 allows all income-eligible workers in Oregon to claim the state's EITC, regardless of how they file their taxes.
- HB 2819 means that 90,000 U.S. citizens living in mixed-status households in Oregon (mostly children) will benefit from the EITC.
- This bill has the potential to impact over 34,000 Oregon families—predominantly Latinx and Asian Americans—who file their taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

I have been living in Oregon for 22 years. I currently live in Woodburn, Oregon. I am working as a farmworker. I live with my husband and three young daughters. Working in the fields is extremely challenging and very poorly paid. I did receive some funds from the city of Canby, and during that time I was struggling and the fund helped me so much. My husband and I both use ITIN numbers to do our taxes. We do not have access to the earned income tax credit because of our legal status.

Having access to the earned income tax credit and to state funds would greatly help my family. It would reduce the numbers of hours we have to work, since we are overworking ourselves and barely making ends meet. We still have not recovered from the pandemic. Having more funds would help us make up what we lost. I would not have so much anxiety over paying my house bills, and I could put money towards my daughters education. It would be so much help to my family and families that use an ITIN number. We are treated differently because of our status. The state isn't helping us like they do citizens. We really need funds.

I believe that Oregon's economic recovery should help those who were hurt most by COVID-19 and our corresponding recession: primarily Oregonians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, women; immigrants; and/or LGBTQ+. Investments that are rooted in racial, gender, and economic justice are what this moment calls for. Now is not the time for Oregon to save money or cut budgets.

By prioritizing the policies included in The People's Budget, you will build an equity-based budget that ensures Oregon emerges stronger than before and is ready to weather future storms. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to give feedback.

Thank you,  
Aurora Martinez