



Date: February 4, 2022
To: House Committee on Business and Labor
From: Jenny Pool Radway, Causa Oregon
Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

Chair Holvey, Vice Chairs Bonham and Grayber, and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee,

My name is Jenny Pool Radway and I am the executive director of Causa. Causa works to improve the lives of Latinx immigrants and their families in Oregon through advocacy, coalition building, leadership development, and civic engagement.

I am writing to you today in support of farmworker overtime. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

At Causa, many of the community members we organize alongside are farmworkers or family members of farmworkers. We have seen firsthand how hard farmworkers work to feed our communities and to maintain their own families. However, the median pay for farmworkers in Oregon is just \$28,000 a year, which is less than a third of Oregon's median income of \$92,000 a year. This means that farmworkers, who are essential to the health and functioning of our state, are unable to access many basic goods and services. Causa envisions a world where all people have opportunities to thrive, and that includes economic opportunities. In order to build that world, we cannot leave our farmworker community, most of whom are immigrants or migrant workers, behind.

Overtime pay law was created to discourage employers from overworking employees. Before 1938, employers overworked workers even to the point of death - which, unfortunately, we have seen here in Oregon in 2021, with at least one immigrant farmworker dying from unsafe working conditions in the heat wave of June 2021. Putting in place an overtime pay law for Oregon's farmworkers would improve health and safety, and would improve overall quality of life for farmworkers.

Overtime pay would extend to Oregon's 86,389 farmworkers, many of whom are Causa's community members, neighbors, friends, and family. Our communities cannot wait any longer to receive just compensation for their crucial work. Therefore, I urge you to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential labor.

Sincerely,

Jenny Pool Radway
Executive Director
Causa Oregon