

Submitter: Constance Yost

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee,

I am writing to you today in support of farmworker overtime.

I believe that it is our moral duty to ensure that farmworkers receive equal treatment and the same quality of life as any other worker.

They are doing important, hard, and dangerous work in one of the largest sectors of our state economy, and they are essential in feeding families across Oregon.

Yet farmworkers are denied the same overtime pay that other workers in Oregon receive.

It is time for Oregon to join several other states in ending this racist practice of excluding agricultural workers from overtime pay.

In the last couple of years, we have seen how truly essential these workers are as they continue to show up despite facing a respiratory pandemic, wildfires, a winter storm and deadly heat waves. Farm workers are poor people who cannot afford to miss work when they have no other economic safety net. It is unconscionable that farm workers receive poverty wages, too often wage theft, and no overtime pay.

Oregon can and must do all we can to ensure that they are paid fairly for their labor. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

I also believe that the implementation period should be 3 years, not 5.

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,

Constance Yost