



Jessica Vega Pederson
Multnomah County Commissioner

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Dear Chair Holvey and members of the House Business & Labor Committee,

Today I write to you in support of HB 4002, which would ensure that farmworkers across Oregon have access to overtime pay and receive the compensation they deserve.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of essential workers who keep the daily machine of modern life operating. Few categories of workers are more essential to our society than farmworkers. The role they play in cultivating, harvesting, and transporting our food from the fields to our grocery stores is an indispensable contribution to our communities.

Unfortunately, for too long farmworkers have lacked access to basic workplace protections that we expect from almost every other workplace setting. By extending to farmworkers overtime protections, we can ensure that these critical workers are receiving the compensation they deserve for the work they perform.

This bill will also benefit our rural and agricultural communities by increasing the amount of money farmworkers have, reducing their need to rely on other social services, and helping to ensure they can obtain stable housing, pay for basic needs, and save for a child's education.

Finally, this bill is the morally right thing to do. There is no reason that farmworkers should not be compensated for the overtime work they perform, and rectifying this policy gap will further our state's progress to be a more equitable home for those who live and work here.

I urge you to support HB 4002, which will provide some of our most essential workers with the compensation and protections they deserve.

Sincerely,

Jessica Vega Pederson
Multnomah County Commissioner