

Date: 02/07/2022

To: House Committee on Business and Labor

From: Alejandro, OR Farm Worker

Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

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

My name is Alejandro, and I live in Boardman Oregon. I have worked in agriculture in the state of Oregon for the past 12 years. Currently, I maintain the tractors at an Alfalfa field. 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.

During the harvest season, there are days where I work between 16 to 18 hours minimum in a single day. During this season, there are no days off. I would go weeks without seeing my daughters, due to my work schedule. I would get home at 11pm and leave for work by 5am, only being able to see my daughters peacefully sleeping and my wife would wake to help prepare my lunch for the day. Farmworkers should be able to spend more time with their families or tend to other responsibilities, instead of spending most of their life at work.

In my experience, we are labeled as essential workers, but we are not valued as people. They don't care about one's health and they don't have respect for us. Sometimes they try to do no more than comply with the minimum of the law. I recently hurt my foot a bit at work, but I ignored it and just tried to get a good night's rest. But I woke up with a very swollen foot, so I called my supervisor for help but he couldn't see me until the next day. And I had to wait forcibly in my hotel because there were no taxis, and besides, by regulation, I had to arrive with my supervisor to receive the treatment. I never reported this, just accept that it was all that could be done for me at the time. Farmworkers are not second-class workers and deserve the same rights as the rest of workers. Farmworkers deserve to be treated humanely.

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,

Alejandro  
Farm Worker  
Boardman, OR