



UNITED FARM WORKERS

Teresa Romero
President
United Farm Workers of America

2/7/2022

House Committee on Business and Labor

Re: **Support for Farmworker Overtime**

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

My name is Teresa Romero, I am the president of the United Farm Workers. The UFW is the nation's first successful and largest farm workers union. Our mission is to help protect the rights and interests of farmworkers by creating a safe and just food supply. The UFW works closely with our sisters and brothers of PCUN in Oregon.

Farm workers do some of the most dangerous work in the State of Oregon. They are disproportionately likely to be harassed, poisoned, seriously injured or killed on the job.

The 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act set minimum wages and other basic protections for nearly every worker in this country. This Jim Crow era legislation excluded work traditionally associated with the labor of Black workers. Members of Congress at the time were explicit that they did not believe Black people deserved the same overtime pay protections as White people. That was wrong then, when most farm workers were Black, and it is wrong now, when most farm workers are Latino.

The UFW worked with the California state legislature in 2016 to end this race based discrimination in California. This was a small step to address one of many unfair and racist exclusions that farm workers face in America.

The economics of overtime pay for California agriculture have had a positive impact. Farm workers are able to get more pay. More pay for farm worker families is important. California remains the largest producer for most fruits, vegetables, and dairy in the United States.

In November of 2020, the Washington State Supreme Court found that the exemption of dairy workers from Overtime was unconstitutional. More recently in April of 2021, the Washington state legislature passed legislation that would make Washington the second state to end the racist overtime exemption for farm workers.



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This is yet another advancement in attaining equality for the men, women and children keeping our domestic food supply intact. They deserve the same protections as the rest of Oregon.

Regardless of the state, fair is fair. Now is the time to commit to the basic idea that Equal is Equal, and every worker should have the same basic rights.

More than 80 years of unequal treatment is enough. It's time. We urge a yes vote on HB 4002.

Si Se Puede!

Teresa Romero
President

¡Si Se Puede!®

Founded by Cesar E. Chavez (1927-1993)