

Submitter: Jessica Martinez Medina

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. Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

For too long we have overlooked the needs of farmworkers even through the pandemic, heat waves, wildfires, and more. It is necessary for Oregon to support farmworkers and do this by ensuring they are paid overtime. It is difficult to be a farmworker because of the lack of security at times and providing them overtime allows them to have more pay to take care of their families and give them respect. It is not fair or equitable for Oregonians to continue to benefit from lack of labor rights farm workers suffer from. Farmworkers are estimated to make between \$17,500 to \$19,999 a year, which is not enough to live on. They deserve dignity, respect and labor rights. For too long they have been denied rights other workers have been afforded.

The lack of overtime pay for farmworkers is an intentional exclusion that is racist and outdated. There is no need to continue to uphold racist policymaking from 1938. It is necessary to create legislative change this short session. We need to start respecting and treating farm workers with dignity. Ensuring that Farmworker Overtime is passed is one step. Oregon needs to join other states like California and Washington who have already passed this legislation.

Overtime pay law was created to discourage employers from overworking employees. Before 1938, employers overworked workers even to the point of death. Exclusion from overtime pay requires farmworkers to work many hours without having time to take care of other responsibilities.

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

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,
Jessica Martinez Medina