

PCUN Farmworker Overtime Bill Testimony

Date: February 7th, 2022

To: House Committee on Business and Labor

From: Maya Lauer

Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime,

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

My name is Maya Lauer, and I live in Salem, Oregon and I currently attend Willamette University. 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.

There are many reasons why you should support this bill. Farmworkers deserve dignity, respect and labor rights because for too long they have been denied rights other workers have been afforded. Farmworkers have been excluded from the minimum wage protections, child labor laws, and overtime pay since the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. There are different overtime rules for people who work in government agencies, hospitals, canneries, factories, and agricultural labor is excluded completely. Farmworkers deserve the same rights as other workers and to be treated humanely.

The exclusion of farmworkers from overtime pay requires them to work many hours providing for the rest of their area, without time to spend with their families or other responsibilities. With overtime pay, farmworkers should be able to live their lives more fully because of the greater job stability and support.

Farmworkers deserve a living wage to pay for their living expenses and farmworkers are some of the lowest paid workers in Oregon with a median of \$28,000 a year. As a state, we cannot afford to not pay farmworkers in Oregon overtime because they will take their abilities to where they are better compensated, leaving Oregon farms behind. We must follow to a certain extent the example of other states that have passed overtime bills in support of farmworkers, including California, Washington, New York, and Colorado.

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. Most importantly this bill needs to be implemented with the utmost sense of urgency, five years is much too long to implement this bill because Oregon farmworkers have been forced to work overtime with no pay, which has generational impacts and continues to treat farmworkers as second-class humans.

Sincerely,

Maya Lauer