

Submitter: Adriana Cvitkovic

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

As a food banker and a farmer, I have Oregon's food system on my mind nearly all the time. Neither farmers nor farmworkers are truly benefitting from the current system. I believe there is a way for farmers and farmworkers to all thrive. While farmworker overtime pay may not be the end-all solution to our food system's problems, it is nonetheless a long overdue protection for agricultural workers in our state. It is unjust and misguided to put the wellbeing of agricultural workers last on the long list of issues needing improvement in our food system. The time is now. Oregon's food production and distribution system is anchored by migrant and seasonal agricultural workers, yet these essential workers are excluded from overtime pay. I believe farmworkers deserve to be treated the same as all other workers. Extending overtime pay for Oregon's farmworkers is necessary to improve their economic security and decrease food insecurity. Throughout the pandemic, catastrophic fires and hazardous air quality levels, farmworkers continued to work to support Oregon's multibillion dollar agricultural industry and keep our food systems afloat. Oregon is behind other states in providing protections and overtime pay to the essential migrant and seasonal workers that our food system depends on. We need to pass Farmworker Overtime as soon as possible so we can all emerge stronger.