

Date: 02/24/2022

To: Joint Committee on Farmworker Overtime

From: Ben Larson

Re: Support for HB 4002-Farmworker Overtime



Co-Chairs Taylor and Holvey, and Members of the Joint Committee On Farm Worker Overtime,

My name is Ben, I live in Creswell, and I am writing on behalf of My Brothers' Farm.

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.

At our farm and all others I've had experience with, we've highly valued skilled labor and rely on the dedication of farm workers. Farming is hard on the body in a regular 40 hour work week, and it is therefore difficult to maintain a longer work week. For employers that pressure and encourage longer work weeks, there should be an expectation that their workers receive benefits like any other standard employee as farmworkers are in higher demand than ever before. Our food systems require more farmworkers and hours and we should therefore reward overtime.

Farmworkers deserve dignity, respect and labor rights. For too long they have been denied rights other workers have been afforded. Farmworkers are not second-class workers and deserve the same rights as the rest of workers. Farmworkers deserve to be treated humanely.

Overtime pay law was created to discourage employers from overworking employees. Extending overtime pay protections to farmworkers will create better health conditions and a longer life for farmworkers, giving them more ability to pass on their knowledge. Farmworkers should also be able to spend more time with their families or tend to other responsibilities, instead of spending most of their life at work.

Farmworkers deserve a living wage to pay for their living expenses. Farmworkers are some of the lowest paid workers in Oregon with a median income of \$28,000 a year. Farmworkers who put food on our table should be able to make enough money to put food on their own table.

I urge you to vote Yes on HB 4002 to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential labor.

Sincerely,

Ben Larson

Owner/Operator

My Brothers' Farm LLC