



Oregon Just Transition Alliance

Date: February 24, 2022

To: House Committee on Business and Labor

From: Joel Iboa, Oregon Just Transition Alliance

Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

Chairs Taylor and Holvey , and Members of the Joint Committee on Farmworker Overtime,

My name is Joel Iboa, I am the proud son of immigrants, and the Executive Director of the Oregon Just Transition Alliance, a movement of communities facing environmental racism, climate change, and economic exploitation. Our Alliance is led by PCUN, Rogue Climate, Verde, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), OPAL Environmental Justice and Beyond Toxics. We believe Farmworkers should receive overtime pay after 40 hours in a workweek at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay.

In the last two years, Oregonians have faced an ongoing pandemic, wildfires like we've never seen before, and an unprecedented heat wave that took the lives of more than 100 people. This doesn't take into account what we were already dealing with: air pollution, lead exposure, unsafe working conditions and other environmental risks. The truth is, while many of us have been impacted, people with disabilities, many rural communities, low income communities, farmworkers, Black, Indigenous, Latinx and other people of color feel it first and worst.

1 in 50 Oregonians are farmworkers. Many of them are my own family members. The world outside our homes has proven to be increasingly hostile yet these folks have

little choice but to do it. Farmworkers shouldn't have to decide between putting food on the table and staying safe. During the 2020 labor day fires—farm workers in makeshift PPE masks were harvesting grapes while the rest of us took refuge in our homes from the smoke (the worst air quality in the world). And we saw with the extreme heat last summer, resulting in the tragic death of a farmworker, Sebastian Francisco Perez.

A just transition means ensuring that communities traditionally hurting the most are front and center, leading the way for their communities. It means paying workers for the time they put in. It means ensuring the people who put food on our tables are compensated and cared for. The rest of us already have the granted right to overtime pay. It's time for farmworkers to have that right too.

Farmworkers are essential. They are essential for our economy, and essential humans in our community. Everyone deserves to be paid fair wages for their labor.

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,

Joel Iboa
Executive Director
Oregon Just Transition Alliance