



February 25th 2022

To: Joint Committee on Farmworker Overtime

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 David De La Torre, and I am writing on behalf of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility. Guided by the values and expertise of medicine and public health, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) works to protect human life from the gravest threats to health and survival. We are an organization of over 2,800 health professionals and public health advocates statewide working collaboratively with community partners to educate and advocate for societal and policy change that protects human health at the local, state, national, and international level. We seek a healthy, just, and peaceful world for present and future generations.

I am writing to you today to express our support for House Bill 4002 Farmworker Overtime, an important bill that will improve the health, wellness, and quality of life of agricultural workers. It is important to note that farmworkers have been excluded from overtime pay since the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Farmworkers deserve to be treated humanely and not denied rights that other workers have been afforded. HB 4002 would be a step towards assuring that these workers who provide essential food to our homes are also supported with the material support that they deserve. This bill would be an important step towards equality and economic justice for communities that have worked incredibly hard to keep food on our shelves amidst wildfire smoke, extreme heat and cold, air pollution and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Extending overtime pay protections to farmworkers will create better health conditions and a longer life for farmworkers. HB 4002 will offer an opportunity to improve economic stability, an important social determinant of health. With overtime pay, they will have more time to spend with family, or tend to other responsibilities. We hope that you will take the opportunity to support this much-needed bill. We urge you to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 legislative session so that we can move closer to fairly paying farmworkers for their skilled and essential labor.

Sincerely,

David De La Torre, Healthy Climate Program Director
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

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