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SUPPORT SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR AG WORKERS: SB 955

In the United States, suicide rates among farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers are <u>almost 58% higher</u> than any other occupation. Key factors contributing to these preventable deaths include financial losses, chronic illness, work-life imbalance, societal stigmas and the physical & social barriers to access mental health services. Additionally, suicide rates in Oregon are higher than the national average.

SB 955 would allocate $300,000 from the General Fund to support implementation of the AgriStress Helpline, a free & confidential crisis/support line that is available 24/7, with interpretation services provided in 160 languages. Differing from the 9-8-8 hotline, the AgriStress Hotline specialists have supplemental training to understand the culture, values, stressors, and lived experiences of agriculture workers. In addition, crisis specialists have access to a state specific curated database of agricultural and health resources.

Farmers and ranchers already have a trusted relationship with OSU Extension Services. This partnership is vital, now more than ever, as the industry faces adverse hardships ranging from extreme weather to increased regulations.

With the help of SB 955, within 30 days the OSU Extension program can:
- Support the AgriStress Helpline, which has proven effectiveness with less than 2% of lifeline calls resulting in hospitalization
- Leverage the strength of the statewide OSU Extension Service to conduct effective education and outreach activities, so that people are aware the resource exists and call the number when they, or a loved one, needs it.

In effort to stop preventable deaths of our local agriculture workers, we urge you to vote YES on SB 955.

COALITION SUPPORTERS

Oregon Cattlemen's Association

OWC — OREGON WINE COUNCIL

OREGON ASSOCIATION OF NURSERIES

Samaritan Health Services

EOCA

Weyerhaeuser

Oregon Women for Agriculture

eocco — EASTERN OREGON COORDINATED CARE ORGANIZATION

OWRC — Oregon Water Resources Congress

FOOD NORTHWEST

OREGON SHEEP GROWERS ASSOCIATION — SINCE 1895

OREGON SEED COUNCIL

OREGON DAIRY FARMERS ASSOCIATION — EST. 1892

CgG — Columbia Gorge fruit growers

OREGON FOREST INDUSTRIES COUNCIL

UMPQUA HEALTH

Yamhill Community Care Organization

OWA — Oregon Winegrowers ASSOCIATION EST 1981

OSA — Marketing Seeds to the World

WVSSA — Willamette Valley Specialty Seed Association

OREGON FARM BUREAU

health share — Health Share of Oregon

OREGON WHEAT

OCBH — OREGON COUNCIL FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

allcare health™

OFS — Oregonians for Food & Shelter