



House Committee on Judiciary

February 27, 2025

## Testimony in Support of HB 3194

Chairs Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathy Lara, Policy Analyst for the Oregon Center for Public Policy, and I respectfully submit this testimony in support of HB 3194 on behalf of the Center. The Oregon Center for Public Policy is a nonpartisan think tank that uses research and analysis to improve the economic outcomes for all Oregonians, especially for those struggling to make ends meet.

HB 3194 strengthens protections against harmful housing conditions by holding landowners accountable for unregistered farmworker camps. It is a critical step toward making sure that all workers in Oregon have access to safe and dignified housing.

**HB 3194 improves the existing system of accountability for landowners and is likely to improve living conditions for agricultural workers.** Farmworkers, especially those in illegal cannabis growing operations, often face unsafe and inadequate housing – often dealing with makeshift shelters and the lack of access to running water or bathrooms. Currently, landowners who lease property to unregistered camp operators are not held accountable for these conditions, which allow these practices to continue. HB 3194 would help address this issue by ensuring landowners are held responsible for the housing provided on their land.

**HB 3194 removes barriers for workers to seek justice.** At the moment, workers must prove ongoing harm in court – which requires workers showing that the harm is still present. This creates a substantial barrier for seasonal workers that have moved on from their job. HB 3194 would eliminate this requirement, allowing workers to hold the responsible parties accountable, even after their employment has ended.

Our mission is to achieve economic justice for all Oregonians through research, analysis, and advocacy.

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HB 3194 will help safeguard workers from hazardous and unlawful housing conditions. All Oregonians deserve to have safe housing. In doing so agricultural workers will have better economic security and overall quality of life.

We urge you to support HB 3194.

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