

Submitter: Beth Outterson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3193

TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards  
FROM: Your name  
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 3193

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Elmer, Vice-Chair Muñoz, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Beth Outterson. I live in Portland and I am writing in strong support of HB 3193, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund.

This legislation is important because we rely on farmworkers for affordable food, yet we provide little support to their health and safety. For nine years I worked on programs supporting migrant and seasonal farmworkers in four states across the US – first as a health educator in labor camps and community health centers, and later at a national farmworker employment and training program. I know that farmworkers don't want to be doing this backbreaking work, but do not have another way to make ends meet.

Farmwork is dangerous and precarious. Farmworkers are often the first to experience the impacts of extreme weather conditions. Research has shown that agricultural workers are 35 times more likely to die from heat-related stress than workers in other industries. Extreme heat and drought also are fueling more intense wildfire seasons, and outdoor workers are increasingly having to deal with harmful exposures to wildfire smoke and unhealthy air quality.

HB 3193 will provide temporary financial relief to farmworkers in Oregon who lose work or wages due to extreme weather conditions. HB 3193 will define a "qualifying disaster" in regards to extreme weather as more than just extreme heat and smoke. This includes snow storms, ice storms, heavy raining, flooding, pandemics, etc. These are conditions in which our farmworkers have continued working, despite the dangerous impacts to them physically and mentally.

Farmworkers are essential in Oregon. The fruits of their labor puts food on our table, yet their efforts are not adequately compensated. They also have the right to be safe regardless of poor weather, toxic wildfire smoke, or extreme heat. As the climate continues to warm, these conditions will only worsen. Are we going to continue to turn a blind eye to the suffering of men, women and children who we rely on for our

own sustenance?

I urge you to vote YES on HB 3193, to provide protections and support for our farmworkers in Oregon.

Sincerely,  
Beth Outtersen