

Submitter: Alexa Darrow
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: Alexa Darrow
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 3193

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

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

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. Conditions in which our farmworkers have continued working in despite the dangerous impacts to them physically and mentally.

I’ve been working in the hospitality industry for almost two decades and have worked closely with restaurants, wineries, etc. throughout my career. I’ve seen first hand how hard these farmers work day in and day out in really intense conditions to help keep these businesses running. I’ve seen these workers out in the fields in every weather event – extreme heat, extreme cold, and in recent years, an increase in having to work in unsafe and toxic conditions due to wildfire smoke in Oregon – yet they aren’t given the same rights and access as everyone else, despite being expected to perform their duties and going above and beyond to make sure these farms are running without a hitch. Without them, these restaurants, wineries, and other hospitality businesses wouldn’t stand a chance, yet they’re being treated as though they’re unimportant.

I believe in basic human rights and equity, and feel strongly that farm workers

deserve more.

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

Sincerely,
Alexa