
March 10th, 2025

House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 3193 (Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund)

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

For the record, my name is Jamie Pang, and I am the new Director of Programs and Policy of Oregon Just Transition Alliance (OJTA). We are a member-based alliance of over 20 frontline urban and rural communities across the state of Oregon, that experience climate change first, and worst. Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of HB 3193.

OJTA currently supports making the Farmworker Disaster Relief fund a permanent one, and we supported the previous one-time iteration from 2021 because it aligns with our core principles of a Just Transition, and centering climate resilience.

2023 was the hottest year on record globally,¹ and Oregonians across the state were severely impacted by wildfires and heat waves. It is estimated that the number of hot days above 86°F will double in some areas of the state.² And during the infamous 2021 heat dome, 102 people died,³ four of whom were workers exposed to extreme heat on the job.⁴

Under a Just Transition framework, addressing climate change isn't just about reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but rather making communities more resilient to its impacts, and mitigating the harms to those already most disproportionately impacted. Farmworkers currently account for 20% of heat-related deaths, making it the leading cause of death in this sector.⁵ And they are on the frontlines of the most taxing work environments. HB 3193 increases resilience for farmworkers by providing them with temporary financial relief if they lose work or wages due to extreme weather conditions, such as heat, smoke, ice storms, and pandemics.

¹[https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/CLIMATECHANGE/Documents/FINAL%20Climate%20Health%20in%20Oregon%202023%20v071124%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/CLIMATECHANGE/Documents/FINAL%20Climate%20Health%20in%20Oregon%202023%20v071124%20(1).pdf)

²<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/CLIMATECHANGE/Documents/2020/Climate%20and%20Health%20in%20Oregon%202020%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf>

³ https://www.opb.org/pdf/OREGON_heat_deaths_revised_1628632311939.pdf.

⁴<https://www.opb.org/article/2021/08/06/oregon-june-heat-wave-deaths-names-revealed-medical-examine/>

⁵ <https://www.ucs.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/farmworkers-at-risk-report-2019-web.pdf>.

Oregon is a leader in the nation in climate action- especially in the face of federal deprioritization. We urge this Committee to continue prioritizing building climate resilience for our low-income, and frontline communities that are disproportionately impacted by disasters. On behalf of OJTA, I urge you to support HB 3193.

Sincerely,

Jamie Pang
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