



TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards

SUBJECT: Support HB 3193

DATE: March 10, 2025

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

My name is Prof. Janet Lorenzen, I live in Salem and teach at Willamette University. I am the legislative coordinator for **350 SalemOR** and I represent 300 members. We are in **strong support of HB 3193**, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund.

Climate change is an on-going problem and we need to plan ahead! Disasters related to climate change are worsening. Over the last few years, farmworkers have been facing an increase in extreme weather conditions such as deadly heatwaves, unprecedented wildfires, and unhealthy air quality. The previous climate change fund provided temporary financial assistance to our farmworkers who lost work and wages because of extreme weather conditions. Some workers lost up to 5 weeks of wages.

Why a fund just for farmworkers?

Research shows **agriculture workers are 35 times more likely to suffer from heat related deaths compared to other industries**. University of Washington conducted research on farmworkers and found that 3 in 4 farmworkers reported exposure to an unhealthy amount of smoke but reported no changes made to their routine or activities.

Oregon has over 72,000 farmworkers. Most farmworkers in Oregon are immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, and Central America, many of whom speak an Indigenous language. In Oregon, an average farmworker makes around \$34,500 annually, living paycheck to paycheck to support their families.

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.

Please protect these essential workers.

Thank you,

Prof. Janet Lorenzen

legislative coordinator 350 SalemOR