

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

As our climate here in Oregon continues to become more and more dangerous the time is urgent to support our Farmworker population who are in the fields everyday picking the food for our families, our restaurants, our schools and our state. The Oregon Farmworkers are the ones who cultivate our nourishment and deserve the same protection and expectations that other workers have. We urgently encourage you to provide them the protections, just like in other industries through OSHA, working conditions that address the harms and environmental exposures that are life-threatening. I have been an executive director for a food justice organization for nearly a decade, I have served our country as a Peace Corps Agriculture Volunteer and have first-hand experience of the working conditions of Farmworkers. I am coming to you not alone, but with a group of unified and concerned leaders in food justice in Oregon. They are chefs, farmers, food business owners and nonprofit leaders. We are a group that is united to make sure that all members of our food community have the same protections and access to healthy and respectful working conditions. You too have experience in this, as each day you reach for an apple, or pear or cucumber, these are pieces of our food system that have been touched by Farmworker hands. The same hands that need your action to protect them to ensure that they can continue to do the skilled work of farm production. This is also about economics, for our farmers, our chefs, our grocery stores and food businesses, if our Farmworkers are not protected and can't do the work, then there is no economic gain or business, no farm business, no food for restaurants, no food for grocery stores. This is not a hard issue to address, protect our Farmworkers before it is too late.