

Submitter: Sarah Butler
On Behalf Of: Ainsworth United Church of Christ
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3193

TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
FROM: Sarah Butler
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 3193

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

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

I spent my career as a forester and botanist in the Pacific Northwest. I have experienced most of the types of dangerous weather that farm workers are exposed to. Fortunately for me, I worked for the federal government and had protections that allowed me to still get paid for days when I couldn't work due to extreme heat, cold, snow, hail, exposure to wildfire smoke, excessive rain, floods, windstorms, etc. I also had paid sick leave so I didn't infect others I was working with when I had infectious diseases. We were constantly encouraged to check with each other to make sure our work sites were safe. If anyone thought there was a danger of anyone getting hurt, we stopped and addressed the issue. This included stopping work and going back to the site when it was safe. As a forest worker, I have experienced first hand how the climate has changed in the Pacific Northwest in the last 33 years. It is definitely getting hotter, and the wildfires are more intense and more unpredictable. Farm workers deserve the same protections that I had. I love the fresh produce and other food produced in Oregon. We need to provide farm workers with safe working conditions. They should not be put in danger in order to provide the rest of us with food. This means providing them with wages when they can't work due to hazardous weather conditions. Farmworkers pay taxes and do very hard work for low wages. The least we can do is give them financial relief when it is unsafe to work.

Please vote YES on HB 3193, to provide protections and support for our farmworkers in Oregon.
Sincerely,
Sarah Butler