

Submitter: Mary Ann Barham
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3193

My name is Mary Ann Barham. I am a resident of NE Portland, a congregant at First Unitarian Church of Portland, and a member of the Sacred Organizing Coalition. I am writing to ask for your support of HB 3193, the Farm worker Disaster Relief Fund.

I grew up in an agricultural community in California and as an adult have volunteered with many organizations that supported farm workers. Here I have witnessed hardships that many farm workers have faced, especially as climate disasters are now so common. I know stories of people who have been exposed to the toxicity of wildfire smoke without protective gear (i.e. masks) which the owners failed to provide; stories of people who had their hours cut because the berries they were to pick would not survive the extreme heat; stories of people who would never considered not going to work, regardless of the conditions, because their families depended on the wages they earned each day.

This bill would provide financial assistance to these workers when extreme weather and air quality numbers made it unhealthy to be outside. This bill would give them options other than going to work when conditions are untenable.. Essential workers in our state should not be expected to risk their health and shorten their lives because they have no option other than going to work!

Thank you....