

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

****Testimony in Support of Oregon House Bill 3193****
Submitted to the Oregon Legislature

****Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,****

My name is Jared Peacock, and I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3193, which establishes a ****permanent farmworker disaster relief program**** in Oregon. This bill is a critical step in ensuring that farmworkers—who are essential to our state's agricultural economy—receive the financial support they need when disasters disrupt their livelihoods.

**Farmworkers Are Essential, Yet Vulnerable**

Farmworkers play a vital role in keeping Oregon's agricultural industry thriving. They labor under extreme conditions, ensuring that food reaches our tables. However, when disasters such as wildfires, floods, extreme heat, droughts, or public health crises occur, farmworkers often experience ****significant job losses and income instability****. Unlike many other workers, farmworkers—especially those paid on a piece-rate basis—frequently ****lack access to unemployment benefits or emergency financial aid****. This leaves them without a safety net during crises.

HB 3193 recognizes these challenges by creating a ****structured, permanent disaster relief program**** that provides direct financial support to farmworkers who lose income due to a qualifying disaster.

**Key Provisions of HB 3193**

1. **Financial Support for Farmworkers Impacted by Disasters**

- Farmworkers who ****lose wages or income**** due to disasters—including those who experience reduced hours due to slower work conditions—would be eligible for assistance.
- The relief program would provide funds to cover ****reasonable and necessary living expenses**** for affected farmworkers.

2. **Eligibility Based on Disaster Impact**

- Applicants must show that they ****lost income due to a qualifying disaster**** and provide their ****employment location (zip code and county)**** at the time of the

disaster.

- This ensures that funds go directly to farmworkers experiencing financial hardship.

3. **Implementation Through the Oregon Health Authority (OHA)**

- The OHA will **partner with worker relief organizations** to distribute funds efficiently.

- The bill allocates **\$10 million from the General Fund** to establish and implement the program for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Why HB 3193 Matters

Disaster Relief is a Matter of Equity

Farmworkers—many of whom are immigrants or low-income workers—often **do not qualify for traditional relief programs**. HB 3193 ensures they receive assistance **without unnecessary barriers**.

Economic Stability for Oregon's Agricultural Industry

Supporting farmworkers **stabilizes the agricultural workforce**, ensuring farms can recover quickly from disasters and maintain food production.

A Permanent Safety Net for the Future

Oregon has seen an **increase in extreme weather events and emergencies**. A **permanent** relief program will prevent future economic crises for farmworkers when disasters strike.

Conclusion

HB 3193 is a **practical, compassionate, and necessary** policy that upholds Oregon's commitment to its essential workers. I strongly urge the Legislature to **pass this bill** to ensure that farmworkers—who sustain Oregon's food supply—are protected when disasters disrupt their livelihoods.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jared Peacock
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