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March 11, 2025

To: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards  
From: Kaleb Lay, Director of Policy & Research,  
Oregon Rural Action



**Subject: Yes on HB 3193**

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

My name is Kaleb Lay and I am Director of Policy & Research with Oregon Rural Action, a grassroots, community-led organization in northeastern Oregon. ORA works extensively with farmworkers and working-class community members in places like the Lower Umatilla Basin, an intensively farmed and industrialized agricultural region in eastern Oregon on the frontlines of climate change.

I am writing in **support of HB 3193**, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund. Farmworkers are often the first to experience the impacts of extreme weather conditions. Research has shown that agricultural workers are 35 times more likely to die from heat-related stress than workers in other industries. Extreme heat and drought also are fueling more intense wildfire seasons, and outdoor workers are increasingly having to deal with harmful exposures to wildfire smoke and unhealthy air quality.

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 despite the dangerous impacts to them physically and mentally.

We encourage the committee to support this bill and, by doing so, to support the tens of thousands of working-class Oregonians we all rely on every day.

Sincerely,

Kaleb Lay  
Director of Policy & Research  
**Oregon Rural Action**