

**Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2548 – Farmworker Standards Board Bill**

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

My name is Debbie Cabrales, and I am the Executive Director of Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos. Our organization is dedicated to supporting farmworkers and their families by ensuring they have access to vital resources and services, including legal assistance, immigration support, health programs, and advocacy against exploitation.

Through our work, we have heard countless stories of farmworkers who pay taxes, contribute to our communities, and work tirelessly, only to be mistreated. These hardworking individuals have been wrongfully fired, denied fair working conditions, and subjected to exploitative practices. This is why I am here to express our strong support for HB 2548, a bill that will empower farmworkers, ensuring their voices are heard and giving them a seat at the table when decisions that directly affect them and their families are made.

HB 2548 aims to rectify the current power imbalance between employers and farmworkers. While some growers may fear losing control over decision-making, this bill simply seeks to ensure farmworkers have a meaningful role in decisions that impact their lives. It's about creating balance, not taking away control, so that farmworkers can contribute to the shaping of policies that affect their working conditions, compensation, and job security.

Like every other worker, farmworkers deserve fair treatment—this includes protection from wrongful termination, standards for their working conditions, fair compensation, and safeguards for their health and safety. It's deeply troubling that growers often reap the benefits of the labor of farmworkers but refuse to pay them a living wage or provide basic protections. What we see is a system that exploits farmworkers, akin to modern-day slavery, rather than treating them with the dignity and respect they deserve.

For decades, farmworkers have endured unjust conditions: low wages, wage theft, long hours, exposure to harmful chemicals, and dangerous working environments. HB 2548 represents an essential step toward addressing these systemic inequities, which are rooted in power imbalances and discriminatory practices that have historically excluded farmworkers from the protections other workers enjoy.

The bill's passage will help break the cycle of exploitation and bring about the necessary changes to protect farmworkers and ensure they are treated fairly. It is the beginning of a much-needed shift toward greater justice and equity in agriculture.

On behalf of Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos, I strongly urge you to support HB 2548 and join us in advocating for farmworkers' rights.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Debbie D. Cabrales