

March 10, 2025

TO: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

RE: Support for House Bill 3193

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

My name is Marisol De La Torre, I live in Albany, Oregon and I am writing in strong support of HB 3193, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund.

Oregon has over 72,000 farmworkers across the state that play a critical role in maintaining our agricultural industry and ensuring a steady food supply. From planting and harvesting to packaging and distribution, their hard work and dedication help feed not only our local communities but also people across the country. Despite the unprecedented wildfires and heat domes across Oregon in recent years, farmworkers have consistently shown up to work in hazardous conditions, ensuring food reaches Oregonians' tables.

Research shows that agricultural workers are 35 times more likely to die from heat-related stress than those in other industries. In addition to extreme heat, drought conditions are driving more intense wildfire seasons, putting outdoor workers at greater risk of harmful exposure to wildfire smoke and hazardous air quality. A 2023 study from the University of Washington found that 3 in 4 farmworkers reported exposure to an unhealthy amount of smoke.<sup>1</sup> These risks have only increased in recent years, making it critical for the legislature to take action.

HB 3193 offers a solution by providing temporary financial relief to farmworkers in Oregon who lose work or wages due to extreme weather conditions. The bill also broadens the definition of a 'qualifying disaster,' extending beyond heat and smoke to include severe snowstorms, ice storms, flooding, and other similar emergency events.

Farmworkers are the backbone of Oregon's agricultural industry, and they deserve the protection and relief this bill provides. By ensuring that these essential workers have financial support during extreme weather events, HB 3193 acknowledges the risks they face daily and helps protect their health and safety.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 3193 to provide protections for our farmworkers in Oregon, who work tirelessly to feed our communities, even in the harshest of conditions.

Respectfully,  
Marisol De La Torre

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<sup>1</sup> Reyes Bercerra, Natalia. "Impacts of the Climate Crisis on Farmworkers." *American Lung Association*, 13 10 2023, <https://www.lung.org/blog/climate-change-impacts-farmworkers>. Accessed 21 02 2025.