

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

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

My name is Henry Martinez, I live in Hillsboro and I am writing in strong support of HB 3193, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund.

Over the last few years, farmworkers have been facing an increase in extreme weather conditions such as deadly heatwaves, unprecedented wildfires, and unhealthy air quality. These workers are essential to our communities and our food supply system and they need to be protected and cared for. Research has shown that agricultural workers are 35 times more likely to die from heat-related stress than workers in other industries.

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 in despite the dangerous impacts to them physically and mentally.

I grew up and went to school with kids whose parents were farmworkers, and know how impacted they are by working conditions. Farmworkers are part of our communities and taking care of them shows that we value their contributions, presence, and that we care about the health and wellbeing of our communities. Climate change continues to bring challenging conditions in agriculture. In the midst of these challenges we need to be looking out for and ensuring the dignity of those who we are asking to meet the dangerous conditions of this changing climate.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 3193, to provide protections and support for our farmworkers in Oregon.

Sincerely,
Henry Martinez