



TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
FROM: UFCW Local 555
Date: 3/10/2025

YES ON HB 3193

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

My name is Madison Walters, I am a member and political liaison of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555. We represent tens of thousands of members across grocery, retail, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors. We take pride in acting as a strong voice for working people. I am writing in strong support of HB 3193, the Farmworker Disaster Relief Fund.

In 2021, the Oregon legislature allocated \$10 million dollars to create a temporary fund for farmworkers who lost wages due to extreme heat or smoke. The fund successfully supported over 9,000 workers in 34 counties, and saved an unknown but likely significant number of lives. For any worker to be forced to pit their personal sense of self-preservation against feeding their family is a barbaric course of action, and if we choose to view ourselves as a civilized State it is incumbent upon us to align our common resources with our common conscience in order to correct that travesty. If passed, HB 3193 will create a permanent relief program under the Oregon Health Authority to support farmworkers who lose work and wages due to extreme weather conditions.

Farmworkers are often the first to experience the negative 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 are also fueling more intense wildfire seasons, and outdoor workers are increasingly having to deal with harmful exposures to wildfire smoke and dangerously unhealthy air quality.

The fund established by HB 3193 can provide temporary financial relief to farmworkers in Oregon who lose work or wages due to extreme weather conditions. HB 3193 will also 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, and pandemics.

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

Sincerely,

Madison Walters

Political Liaison
UFCW 555



UNITED FOOD & COMMERCIAL WORKERS LOCAL 555

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