



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, H-479
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for HB 2548 -2

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and members of the committee,

My name is Tom Andersen, and I represent House District 19 in South Salem. Many years ago, I worked as a hay stacker for three summers in northern Nevada, near Oregon border. My labor, and those of the other hay stackers, was vital for the operations of the farm. The importance of the work that farmworkers do is still true today. My district, like much of the Willamette Valley, is home to many farmworkers. During my time in the state legislature and Salem City Council before that, I have had many conversations with farmworkers about the numerous issues that they face as they advocate for fair pay and better working conditions.

Oregon's farmworkers are vital to our state's agricultural success. However, they face dire conditions with inadequate protections. The Farmworker Standards Board will spur collaboration among empower workers and employers alike to establish fair wages, safe working conditions, and necessary training protocols. As it will be composed of an equal number of representatives of industry and workers, this collaboration and compromise will be necessary and will allow both parties to share their perspectives and create solutions that work for everyone.

The farming industry contributes over \$6.8 billion annually to Oregon's economy. The workers who make that industry possible deserve the right to advocate for a living wage. HB 2548 ensures farmworker voices help shape industry standards. This legislation is a stride towards rectifying the injustices faced by a workforce predominantly composed of Latino laborers, creating a balanced forum to ensure compliance and effectiveness. As we continue to see the impacts of farm consolidation, we need a new approach. HB 2548 -2 creates the framework for this approach, and I urge an aye vote.

Sincerely,

Tom Andersen
State Representative
House District 19

