

Submitter: Ruby Cisneros
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548
TO: House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
FROM: Ruby Cisneros
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 2548

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the Committee, My name is Ruby Cisneros, I live in Corvallis and I am writing in strong support of HB 2548 to create a Farmworker Standards Board in Oregon.

There are over 72,000 Oregon farmworkers, who put food on our tables and contribute over \$6.4B to our state's economy, yet they experience poor working conditions and earn an average of just \$34,500 annually. Most farmworkers are immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, and Central America, many of whom speak an Indigenous language.

HB 2548 will give historically excluded workers their first voice in setting industry standards with real enforcement power and accountability. The board will ensure access to fair wages, safe conditions, and protection from retaliation.

Cities and states across the country have proven that workforce standards boards work. These boards bring workers together with industry and public representatives to set meaningful standards, with real enforcement power to ensure accountability. From New York's farm laborers to Minnesota's nursing home staff to Seattle's domestic workers, these boards give workers the voice and protections they deserve and give our communities the essential food we need.

This topic sits close to home as the majority of farm workers and I share similar backgrounds. Being from historically oppressed communities, having a voice in the workplace can be challenging, but it can also make a world of difference. Farm workers are essential workers but it is not an easy task, and they must face the harsh weather conditions here in Oregon. Whether rain or shine, Oregon families still need food on their plates and farm workers work hard to provide that. This is one of the many reasons as to why creating the Farmworker Standards Board is important for the well being of farm workers. Not only will it make it possible to advocate for safer working environments, but also allows farm workers to advocate for their needs such as stronger wages.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 2548 to create a Farmworker Standards Board and

give farmworkers the ability to set standards for the industry.

Sincerely,
Ruby Cisneros