

Submitter: Nikolos Rice

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548

Chair and members of the committee,

I urge you to support this bill because it provides essential protections for some of the hardest-working yet most vulnerable members of our workforce—agricultural workers. These individuals play a crucial role in our economy and food supply, yet they often labor under some of the most challenging conditions with the least job security.

This Act establishes a dedicated labor standards board to ensure agricultural workers receive fair treatment, clear protections, and a voice in shaping the conditions of their work. It sets minimum working standards, ensuring that those who grow and harvest our food are treated with dignity. It also introduces a just cause standard for termination, a basic protection that most workers in other industries already have. Without it, farmworkers can be dismissed without explanation, leaving them without income or recourse, often at the worst possible times.

Additionally, by requiring regular reviews and training standards, this bill ensures that protections keep pace with industry changes and that workers, both supervisory and nonsupervisory, have access to the knowledge they need to stay safe and informed. The requirement for an annual report to the Governor and Legislative Assembly fosters transparency and accountability, ensuring that the board's actions are guided by ongoing evaluation rather than stagnation.

This bill is not just about labor laws—it is about fairness, stability, and respect for the people who keep our agricultural industry running. No one should fear losing their job for arbitrary reasons, and no worker should lack the fundamental standards that promote safety, fairness, and economic security. I urge you to stand with agricultural workers and support this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nikolos Rice