



March 18, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB 2541, which will extend workplace protections to certain agricultural workers, ensuring they have the right to express breast milk during work hours.**

My name is Alberto Gallegos and I am providing testimony on behalf of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Oregon. SEIU Oregon is composed of SEIU Local 503 and SEIU Local 49, which together represent over 87,000 people. Local 49 represents private sector janitors, property service workers, light manufacturing, and healthcare workers; while Local 503 represents homecare workers, private nonprofit workers, in-home childcare providers, nursing home workers, and state and local government employees.

Farmworker women play a critical role in Oregon's agricultural industry, yet many are excluded from basic workplace protections that allow them to express milk on the job. HB 2541 would fix this by extending these protections to seasonal and piece-rate farmworkers who are currently left out.

Breastfeeding provides life-saving health benefits for babies and better long-term health outcomes for mothers, but too many farmworker women are forced to stop breastfeeding earlier than they want because they lack a safe, private space to pump at work. These mothers often return to work shortly after childbirth out of financial necessity, working long hours in physically demanding conditions without the same rights and accommodations granted to other workers. They deserve the same protections to continue providing for their families while giving their children the healthiest start possible.

Oregon law already requires most employers to provide lactation breaks and a private space for milk expression, but the current law leaves out farmworker mothers who work seasonally or are paid by the piece. HB 2541 closes this gap and ensures that all working mothers, regardless of the type of work they do, have the ability to pump at work without risking their income or their child's health.

When we protect farmworker mothers, we protect families, public health, and the strength of Oregon's agricultural workforce. Passing HB 2541 is a simple, common-sense step to ensure that every working mother has the support she needs to care for her child while contributing to our economy.

SEIU Oregon urges the Committee to support HB 2541.

Thank you,



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

Alberto Gallegos
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