



Date: April 2, 2025
To: Senate Labor and Business Committee
RE: Please support -1 amendment to SB 999

Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Wine Council, which represents over 50 percent of the Oregon wine grapes grown, produced, and sold, we are asking you to support SB 999 and the -1 amendment to the bill.

Farmworker housing is a critical issue for our members, particularly those with vineyards in communities where housing is limited or exceedingly expensive. Oregon wine grape growers recognize the need for safe, comfortable and accessible housing for our farmworkers, many of whom have worked on our farms and vineyards for many years.

An increasing number of vineyards are helping to address farmworker housing shortages by providing single-family private homes on vineyards. Unfortunately, the OR-OSHA rules adopted on January 8, 2025 to regulate farmworker camp regulations fail to take into account the impact these regulations have on these single-family homes that are leased to employees. The application of OR-OSHA's ag labor housing regulations to private homes is not only outside the scope of federal OSHA's authority but is also misaligned with Oregon statute.

Regulating single-family homes on vineyards and other farms as "worksites" creates significant liability for employers seeking to provide safe and affordable housing for their workers. It is unreasonable to ask employers to manage a private home around the clock, as they would a worksite, in order to ensure they remain in compliance and avoid penalties.

Under these new rules, many employers will be unwilling to take on the liability, excessive cost, and potential penalties of providing single-family homes to farmworkers, decreasing access to affordable housing for this critical workforce and their families.

SB 999 and the -1 amendment ensures that farms and vineyards are able to provide family housing to farmworkers without the risk of significant penalties. Our vineyards cannot operate without farmworkers, and we believe it is our responsibility to make every effort to help them find – or to provide – accessible, affordable housing for them and their families.

Please support our farmworkers and their families by voting yes on SB 999 with the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,

Fawn Barrie
Executive Director
Oregon Wine Council