

## **Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 5005 –1 amendment**

Co-Chair Broadman, Co-Chair Evans, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety,

For the record, my name is Debbie Cabrales, and I am the Executive Director at Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos. Our organization provides critical support to farmworkers and their families, ensuring they have access to essential resources, such as legal aid, integration immigration services, access to targeted health and well-being programs, and advocacy against exploitation. I am here in strong support of HB 5005 with the -1 amendments filed in OLIS. The -1 amendments would continue the Current Service Level (CSL) for the Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant. Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos is currently a grantee of this grant as part of the Cannabis Worker Resilience Partnership (CWRP), where we have been able to provide services and help community members who have been lured to work in Oregon's illegal cannabis industry and were left with no pay, horrendous living conditions, exploitation, and trauma.

At Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos, we have heard so many stories of community members who have lived in horrible conditions while working in the cannabis industry. That's why I am here to express our strong support for continued CSL funding for this grant, particularly for the ongoing support of community-based organizations responding to this humanitarian crisis.

Many community members that have worked in the cannabis industry have not only been exploited, but have lived through horrible conditions, in places where there is no bathroom, no showers, no potable water, no electricity, no heater or air conditioning—where workers have to bring their own tents to sleep in, live in bare sheds, or make do with tarps and cardboard. One of the community members that we helped through the CWRP program, opened up to us and expressed how the frigid environment, with tasks conducted in cramped metal train containers heated by a small space heater for just a few hours in the morning, left her fingers, toes, and legs numb. The temperatures were near freezing, and the bathrooms, which were a 15-minute walk away, were filthy and unsanitary. The stress and harsh working and living conditions caused severe physical and emotional health issues, including depression, insomnia, and nervous system problems due to the immense physical and emotional stress she was under.

It's deeply concerning that when illegal cannabis operations suddenly shut down, workers are often left with little recourse for justice. Those who find the courage to speak up share horrific stories—being held at gunpoint at the camp, denied their hard-earned wages, enduring trauma, and living in unsafe conditions.

The work of the CWRP program is unique in that it brings together legal providers, community-based organizations, and mental health professionals to offer wraparound support for these workers. This model meets the moment. Thanks to the \$26 million in

funding in 2021 and 2022 through the Illegal Marijuana Enforcement Grant, we've been able to build a powerful partnership that directly supports those on the frontlines.

One of our key partners works closely with law enforcement, and we remain committed to fostering collaboration to holistically address the ongoing challenges caused by illegal cannabis operations.

This issue isn't going away anytime soon, but thanks to sustained investments from the legislature over the years, we're providing critical resources to the workers who need them most.

On behalf of Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos, I urge your strong support of HB 5005 with the-1 amendment. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Debbie D. Cabrales