



May 28, 2025

To: House Committee on Rules

From: Peter Hainley, CASA of Oregon

Re: Support for HB 2548-7

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Hainley. I am the executive director of CASA of Oregon. CASA has been working with local communities to create housing, facilities and asset building opportunities for 37 years. We were originally founded to address the lack of housing and services for farmworkers. That work is still a foundation of our current mission.

The state of Oregon has long-held the importance of farmworkers to our state's agriculture industry. It is the reason that we have passed laws to protect them, compensate them and house them. These laws have been passed because farmworkers lack many of the basic protections available to most other workers (ie access to protections under the National Labor Relations Act, lack of documentation means lack of access to federal programs as well as the lack of protections afforded under several federal programs). And we know that in certain industries, particularly hemp and marijuana, workers have been subjected to abuse.

While the establishment of workforce boards is an elegant solution to better the working conditions for farmworkers, we understand the need for an interim step. The -7 amendment calls for the state to conduct a study on Oregon farmworkers and learn about their experiences at the workplace .

Farmworkers are the backbone of our \$6.4 billion agricultural. This study will be a first step in an effort to keep farmworkers safe as well as describing how agricultural labor is an essential and critical industry in Oregon. This study is crucial to understanding how our agriculture industry operates in Oregon.

I urge you to vote YES on HB 2548-7 to help the legislature and the public be better informed about the conditions that farmworkers are facing in the workplace. By funding a study through Portland State University, this bill puts the voices of workers at the center of policymaking while also including the perspectives of farmers.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and thank you for your service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Peter Hainley
Executive Director