



community alliance of tenants

Re: Support for HB 2548 -7 – Farmworker Report Study

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

My name is Alexis Ames, and I'm writing on behalf of the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), Oregon's only statewide, tenant-led organization focused on housing justice. We urge your support for HB 2548 -7 to fund a comprehensive study on the conditions Oregon's farmworkers face in their workplaces.

At CAT, we work with tenants across the state, many of whom are also agricultural workers, who are trying to keep a roof over their heads while enduring unstable, unsafe, or unfair working conditions. Like tenants, farmworkers are too often invisible in policy conversations despite being essential to our communities and our economy.

We support HB 2548 -7 because:

- **It gives voice to Oregon's farmworkers.** Farmworkers contribute over \$6.8 billion to Oregon's economy, and yet earn an average of only \$34,500 a year. Many are immigrants or Indigenous language speakers. Despite their vital role, they remain excluded from core labor protections and collective bargaining rights.
- **It acknowledges the connection between housing and labor justice.** Farmworkers are often forced to accept substandard housing tied to their employment. Without data and documentation, it's hard to hold anyone accountable for unsafe, overcrowded, or retaliatory conditions.
- **It helps the public and legislators understand what's really happening.** This study, conducted through Portland State University, would highlight the lived experiences of farmworkers and include the perspectives of growers. That's how we craft real, lasting solutions—by listening to those most impacted.
- **It builds toward equity.** The lack of research has allowed systemic neglect to continue. This bill is a step toward ensuring that farmworkers aren't left out of policy conversations any longer.
- **This is about dignity.** Every worker deserves respect, a safe workplace, and a path to speak up without fear. This study lays the groundwork for future reforms rooted in truth and lived experience.

Opponents may ask why a study is necessary, but how can we fix what we refuse to examine? HB 2548 -7 ensures the state hears from those who feed us and are often unheard.

We urge you to support HB 2548 -7 and affirm Oregon's commitment to equity, transparency, and worker dignity.

Thank you for your time and for standing with workers and renters alike.



community
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tenants

Sincerely,
Alexis Ames
Senior Policy Coordinator
Community Alliance of Tenants