



Urban League of Portland

TO: House Committee on Rules
FROM: Justice Rajee
SUBJECT: Yes on HB 2548 -7

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

My name is Justice Rajee, I am the Director of Reimagine Oregon at the Urban League of Portland and I am writing testimony in strong support of HB 2548 -7 to conduct a study on Oregon farmworkers and learn about their experiences at the workplace.

There are over 72,000 Oregon farmworkers, who put food on our tables and contribute over \$6.8B to our state's economy, yet they earn an average of just \$34,500 annually. Most farmworkers are immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, and Central America, many of whom speak an Indigenous language.

Farmworkers and farmworker advocates brought forward a policy to establish a workforce standards board in Oregon. Unfortunately, it is not moving forward this session. While farmworkers and immigrants face attacks from the federal administration, the Oregon legislature has the opportunity to learn about the challenges farmworkers are facing.

HB 2548 -7 will help inform the legislature and the general public 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. This is how we create lasting, effective change through listening, research, and engagement.

Farmworkers deserve the protection, care, and workplace protections that all workers deserve. They are essential workers, who move our agricultural production from the fields to the table that nourish all of us. We depend on them the same way their families and communities depend on their well-being, health, and vitality. Study of the workplace conditions our farm workers face is essential to developing policy that honors their work and ensures our state is a place where all work is treated with dignity and respect.

I urge you to support HB 2548 with the -7 amendment and invest in Oregon's ability to understand and serve the people who feed our state.

Sincerely,

