

Bethany Allen - Owner, Harvest Tide Organics
Re: LD 357
Submitted to the Labor Committee on April 2, 2025

Members of the Labor Committee,

My name is Bethany Allen, I reside in Bowdoinham, Maine, and I own Harvest Tide Organics, a 50 acre organic vegetable farm that sells vegetables directly to Mainers through a CSA and wholesale to regional distributors. We have been in business for 10 years and currently employ 10-16 people depending on the season. I am submitting this testimony to assert my support for the proposed legislation LD 357 in support of a minimum wage for agricultural workers.

I will keep this brief, members of the committee, you should absolutely support this bill. As a farm, we have never paid anyone even close to the minimum wage on our farm. I don't honestly know any farm who has, even as the minimum wage has risen in Maine. While there are a number of ways that farming can be different from other types of employment, I can't think of any reason that would justify paying any Mainer below the state minimum wage.

This bill will not affect in any way my ability to succeed or grow as a business in Maine, or to attract employees to work on the farm. It is my belief that this bill protects the **most vulnerable** populations farming in Maine, and that is an important and critical measure that should be taken given the historical abuses associated with farm work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.