

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and distinguished members of the committee on Labor,

My name is Johanna Davis and I am an agriculture employee at Villageside Farm in Freedom, Maine. I am writing in support of LD 589 An Act to Make Agricultural Workers and Other Related Workers Employees under the Wage and Hour Laws.

Farm workers deserve the same right to overtime pay as all other hourly employees.

Yes, our growing season is short. Yes, there are extreme weather events that often require extended hours of work in a short period of time. And in each of these cases there are also people stepping up, working longer days, getting it done. They deserve what all other hourly employees deserve. Time and a half over time pay. Farming is extremely hard. Its hard to make ends meet, hard to make the numbers add up, hard to decide if its all worth it. However, treating agriculture employees as different, not allowing them the same benefits as all other employees, that doesn't help improve anything. In fact the better jobs that farms can provide for their workers the stronger, more robust and resilient our rural communities will be.

Our food system is broken. There are so many ways in which it doesn't work. However it doesn't become fixed by continuing to take advantage of the people who work so hard so that we can eat.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 589 An Act to Make Agricultural Workers and Other Related Workers Employees under the Wage and Hour Laws.

Thank you,  
Johanna Davis  
Freedom, ME