

Phoebe Dolan
Maine Youth Power
LD 357

Chair Tipping, Chair Roeder and the distinguished members of the Committee on Labor,

My name is Phoebe Dolan and I am a resident of Belfast, Maine. I represent Maine Youth Power, a youth-led youth movement building power to win human dignity, equity, access and a livable future across rural and suburban Maine.

I am writing in support of LD 357 An Act to Establish a State Minimum Hourly Wage for Agricultural Workers. Farmer workers across Maine are entitled to be treated as full employees with wages that reflect their humanity as workers in our state.

I have spoken with small farm owners across Waldo County, where I live and many of them either already paid their workers well above Maine's minimum wage or they pay them \$14.65.

With the rising cost of living and low availability of on-farm housing as well as regular housing stock, it is vital that farm workers are compensated along with the rest of Maine workers.

To invest in the future of Maine's farms, fisheries and wild barrens we must make a plan to compensate these workers fairly so they can afford to support farms year after year.

Establishing a minimum wage for farm workers is an issue of fairness and equity. We cannot increase our state minimum wage with an understanding that it is necessary and not include farm workers. As young Mainer and member of Maine Youth Power, it is our priority to support farm workers here in Maine who grow the food we eat and contribute to a thriving Maine economy.

I urge you to support LD 357 An Act to Establish a State Minimum Hourly Wage for Agricultural Workers.

Thank you for reading,
Phoebe Dolan