

Carrie Horne  
Appleton  
LD 1483

Testimony in Support of LD 1483 “An Act to Protect the Rights of Agricultural Workers”

April 17, 2023

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Committee on Labor and Housing,

I am writing today to encourage you to support LD 1483: “An Act to Protect the Rights of Agricultural Workers”.

LD 1483 would improve access to needed services for our agricultural workers. When workers are denied access to service providers, whether it be health care providers, legal advocates, education providers, members of the clergy, they cannot get the care, support, and resources that they need to be healthy and productive. Without these protections, workers would have barriers to seeking needed healthcare for illness or could spread illness to other workers; they would have barriers to continuing their education if they so desire; barriers to legal counsel for their own protection and advocacy; and barriers to connecting with clergy to pursue their religious beliefs. In addition, when employers interfere with their employee’s access to housing, or have the right to threaten their employee with losing access to housing, they invade that worker’s privacy and the privacy of their family. Freedom of access to needed services sets the stage for a healthy, inclusive workforce that can be productive and motivated to complete their jobs adequately and in a timely manner, and would also reduce training hours for new staff needed for attrition due to discontent and illness.

LD 1483 protects essential farm worker’s rights so that they don’t need to live in fear, and can participate more fully in the community. This bill will ultimately help all workers, agricultural businesses, groceries and consumers in Maine by providing fair, safe and equitable employment for our Maine farm workers.

Sincerely,  
Carrie Horne  
Resident of Appleton Maine