



Board of County Commissioners
Multnomah County Chair
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97214

April 13, 2020

Emergency Board Members
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Emergency Board Members,

We are writing to express our support for the Oregon Workers Relief Fund.

Oregon's economy is supported by our undocumented communities, which make up a large part of the labor market working in agriculture, food service, hospitality, manufacturing, and the retail trade. These workers are part of the backbone of our community.

With Oregon unemployment numbers increasing by 94%, these communities are, without a doubt, losing jobs and income. Since many immigrant families have members who are both documented and undocumented living in the same household, this loss of income will affect both documented and undocumented family members, including those who are US citizens. And due to historically low wages in the sectors in which they work, these households have little to no savings to cushion them against the impact.

Our undocumented immigrant workers do not qualify for unemployment insurance and are not covered by any of the protections or support provided by federal COVID relief packages. Without state intervention, they and their families face severe hardship. The economic, health, educational and social consequences will be felt throughout our community.

For these reasons, we ask that the Oregon Legislature support the Oregon Workers Relief Fund and provide our undocumented community with immediate and much-needed support during this crisis -- a wage replacement benefit equivalent to unemployment insurance benefits received by other laid-off workers.

Sincerely,

Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair

Sharon Meieran
District 1 Commissioner

Susheela Jayapal
District 2 Commissioner

Jessica Vega Pederson
District 3 Commissioner

Lori Stegmann
District 4 Commissioner