



**Commissioner Brad Avakian**  
Bureau of Labor & Industries

## **Press Release**

For Immediate Distribution

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### **Avakian Applauds Withdrawal of Proposed Agriculture Rules**

*U.S. Department of Labor bows to pressure from public, Oregon's Labor Commissioner*

**PORTLAND-** The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) is [abandoning proposed rules limiting the opportunities of workers](#) under 16 in agricultural settings, a proposal which was strongly questioned by the agricultural community and Oregon's Labor and Industries Commissioner, Brad Avakian. In a March 5 letter to Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and [comments published in Capital Press](#), Avakian pushed back on the need for rule changes, citing Oregon's strong safety record for youth in agriculture and the importance of preserving both a traditional Oregon industry and job opportunities for young people. On the announcement of the withdrawal of the proposed rules, Avakian made the following statement:

“USDOL made exactly the right decision here, jettisoning a rules proposal that would unnecessarily hurt Oregon's economy and young workers and instead focusing on expanding the educational programs, like Oregon's excellent FFA, 4-H and Voc Ag programs, that have helped make our state so successful by training young people in safety and job skills. Oregon successfully balances safety and opportunity through good cooperation between the agricultural industry and the smart enforcement efforts of the Bureau of Labor and Industries, and I hope that we can serve as an example to other states and USDOL.

“Our commitment to education is certainly a key part of our success, and an aspect that I hope will be reenergized in our communities as we begin to roll out career and technical education revitalization grants next week.”

Avakian championed restoration of hands-on learning and career exploration in Oregon public schools, winning creation of a \$2 million grant fund in 2011. The inaugural round of grant awards will be announced Monday, funding programs from information technology to agricultural science to visual art design involving 21 Oregon schools.

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