

Ruth Striegel

I urge the EIB to adopt strong occupational heat standards to protect our workers as our summers become increasingly hot due to climate change. Working in high heat for long periods is unsafe and inhumane. My faith tradition teaches me to care for my neighbor as myself, and I ask that these standards do the same.

The standards as written are very good, but can be improved in a few ways. Please add clarity to emergency procedures, so that everyone involved can take appropriate actions when someone suffers a heat-related illness and needs immediate help. Better language in this area could save lives! Please make it clear that an air-conditioned space is not exempt if the air conditioning is not working. I have personally experienced working as a teacher in classrooms with broken air conditioning, and it was misery for both me and my students—no one was learning. Delivery workers may have air-conditioned cabs, but when they are continually getting out to deliver packages or working in the back of the truck they need to be covered by these standards.

Finally, make sure that employers provide their workers with complete information and training about the heat standards, including non-retaliation laws. The system depends on workers coming forward when they perceive a violation, so they must be sure that they are safe from pushback when they do so.

Thank you for taking these points into consideration.