

My name is Mary Jo Davies and I reside in Harney County. I am a fourth generation involved in agriculture. Agriculture is a very unique segment of business in our state. It is actually the backbone of our economy. One aspect is the method farmers/ranchers are paid. We do not set our price. We are paid the price that is offered. It changes significantly year to year, sometimes weekly throughout a year. We have no control over our compensation.

Agricultural employees are many times paid a wage along with housing, utilities, insurance, fuel, possibly meat or produce etc.

Therefore the actual hourly wage is not necessarily reflective of the total compensation. Most jobs you go to work for 8 hours and go home. Everything can wait another day. In agriculture you are dealing with live and/or time sensitive products. The animals can not wait another day for care. Nor can crops wait for harvest. While the HB2358 bill is most likely intended as a boost to agricultural employees it will actually be detrimental to them. Their wages and or other compensation will have to be adjusted to be feasible for the business to be able to keep employees. Agriculture is taking hit after hit already this year. Fuel prices are way up and there is talk of increased taxes etc. The "pandemic" has made it very difficult and costly to acquire necessary products. This bill HB2358 will just be one more obstacle to even stay in business.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will realize the importance of keeping agriculture viable in our great state of Oregon!