

Hi, my name is Richard Montecucco, and I am part owner in a farm in Montecucco Farms L.L.C. in Canby, OR. We employ around 150 employees to weed, harvest, and package the root vegetables we grow.

I am strongly against House Bill 2358, because of the fact it will hurt my employees pocket more than people think. If our farm is required to pay overtime we will be forced to reduce crew hours to only 8 hours and have multiple shifts to take up the remainder of the work. This would make our employees needing to find a second job to keep up with paying their bills because us farmers can not afford to pay overtime. Our business has a lot of competition from Mexico to where their labor costs are not even remotely close to what we pay, and being a commodity we are Mexico is able to set the price and 100% of the time it is significantly less than the U.S. Overtime will force not only our farm but the majority of other farms to look at using new technology such as robotic weeders, automatic planters, and mechanised harvesters to replace farm labor. Look at California, they cut labor and are now using robotic weeders and autonomous tractors to take the place of people.

I will admit farm labor is very tough and hard work. I work right alongside our employees out in the field and so I know the hard work they are doing. I would not have our employees do anything I would not. Majority of our employees are already being paid more than minimum wage just in order to keep them working for us because of the labor shortage. If we did not compensate and treat our employees well, we would lose them to other jobs that will pay them more. So I urge you to vote against HB 2358.

Thank You.