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Chair Paul Holvey,
House Business and Labor Committee

I am writing you to express my concerns about the unintended consequences of HB 4002.

I try to provide a steady and dependable 40-hour work week for my employees even with Oregon's unreliable weather. For the most part I have been successful by creating jobs that can be done indoors when the weather is too wet, cold or hot. These are jobs that could be done at another time of the year but are fill ins when the weather won't cooperate during harvest season. This also means it gives my employees the opportunity to make some extra money by working a dry Saturday during the harvest season. If, however I am required to start paying overtime past 40 hours then I will have to do what other employers in Oregon do such as big box stores and not schedule them on a rainy day.

I will have to "save" that day for later in the week where hopefully we can work outside. So instead of being able to provide a steady 40 hours of employment per week with an opportunity for additional pay, my employees will be faced with the ups and downs suffered by others.

So, you ask why can't I just do what I am doing and pay overtime on a Saturday? Unfortunately, as a producer competing with entities across the country and Canada, we can only increase our prices by the limited amount the market will bear. Much of this capacity has been used with Oregon's higher minimum wage along with our higher transportation costs getting our product to market.

My business can not sustain multiple years of loses which I believe passage of HB 4002 will create. It is tough enough with everything we are trying to do keep our employees safe with the pandemic and maintain some type of production.

I believe the passage of HB 4002 in its current form, will result in losing the weekly stability for my employees as we will be forced to vary hours, do more mechanization to curtain jobs, and most drastic for all, quit. At some point a business model is not sustainable and has to stop.

I would hate to see farmers give up because our land use system relies on a balance. There are those who want to continue to expand our urban growth boundaries and those who traditionally push back on those boundaries to maintain the natural resource lands for farming and forestry. That balance is important to maintaining the system which has made Oregon unique.

Thank you for your consideration as I would urge your to reject HB 4002 in its current form.

Sincerely,

Rod Park