



We are Steven Gold and Joseph Gold. We live in Washington County Oregon and we grow ornamental landscape material on our family farm which has been in business here for over 57 years. We employ over 65 full time permanent employees. We are concerned about the impact that ag overtime (HB 4002) would have on our operations.

Gold Family Farms, Inc. provides 100% of the cost of high quality healthcare coverage for all of our employees at a cost to our company of \$456,000.00 per year, because it is the right thing to do. We compensate our employees fairly at a starting wage of \$15 per hour and an average rate of \$18.21 per hour for experienced employees.

We already struggle with a shrinking labor force and to attract employees also offer a 401K program with a 5% match (\$140,000 match in 2021). We pay for tuition reimbursement, provide scholarships to dependents and donate to local education STEM programs (in 2021 at \$13,000.00 and \$30,000 in 2020). In 2021 we paid out over \$151,000.00 in year end bonuses to our employees. If ag overtime is required, we may be forced to cease paying year-end bonuses, create staggered shifts to limit each employee to under 40 hours and invest more in automation and mechanization thereby reducing the employees take-home pay.

Additionally, Washington County Oregon is one of the most expensive places to live with limited inventory in affordable ranges which adversely affects our employees. We have invested over \$1.37M in 2020 and 2021 on opportunities to provide free or reduced housing to our employees. Increases in wages through this ag overtime legislation would impact our ability to develop and expand these opportunities for our employees.

Oregon Nurseries cannot increase the sale price of our crops when labor costs increase. Consumers in the global commodity market set our prices. As a grower in Oregon we compete with states like New Jersey, Alabama, Georgia, and N. Carolina whose wages are \$7.25 per hour up to \$10.45 before we factor in the high cost of transportation of our product to these critical markets. The added costs of paying overtime will put Oregon products at an even further competitive disadvantage in these markets.

Only seven states have adopted ag overtime policies, and most have crafted policies that ensure that local farms can remain viable and that employees' jobs and paychecks are protected. Several states have adopted policies to meet seasonal needs and others established higher overtime thresholds that help avoid some of the worst consequences.

As a company which stands to lose their family business or at best reduce our production to adjust to this mandate to our unique industry. We urge you to oppose an overtime mandate at 40-hours.

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