

Submitter: Jon Iverson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

I farm in Clackamas County. I grow a ever changing crop mix but mainly grass seed, cover crop seed, grapes, tulips, and hemp and we employ around 15 full time employees, and about 20 seasonal employees, many of whom come back to my farm year after year. I am concerned about the impact that ag overtime would have on my farm and employees. I do everything I can to compensate employees fairly, but as a farmer, I am a price taker. This means that I cannot increase the sale price of my crops when labor costs increase. Consumers in the global commodity market set our prices. Any added costs will have to be absorbed by my family's farm. That's the economic reality for those of us in agriculture.

Oregon's specialty crops are labor intensive and have peak seasonal needs, including harvesting, pruning, and planting. A 22 week busy season exemption would be very helpful. Many of our employees ask for extra hours in the summer to help get them through the rest of the year, with 40 hour overtime those opportunities will disappear. We already pay most of our entry level employees 17 to 19 dollars and hour, I can't afford to to pay \$27 for the same tasks that a lot of states farmers pay \$7.25 for.

As a family business, we can't operate at a loss year-over-year. Mandating overtime after 40-hours demands wages that are not possible with the economics of agriculture and will result in reduced pay and opportunities for farm employees. 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 someone who stands to lose their family business, I urge you to oppose an overtime mandate at 40-hours.