

Submitter: John Zielinski

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Though I can assume that you are opposed to the repeal of the Ag Overtime exemption. I would like to share a real life situation where this Bill negatively impacts agricultural workers.

On our farm we start pruning our apple, pear, and peach orchards starting in November. Being an Oregonian whose district is on the West side of the Cascades I am sure that you know it can rain, sometimes for days on end in the winter. Our crew doesn't work when it is raining all day. Unlike harvest which needs to happen in a very brief time span we have the winter and part of the spring to complete pruning the orchards. Since our employees don't work in the driving rain there are times when they miss multiple day in a week. Historically they make up for this by pruning when there are extended dry periods that believe it or not do happen here in Western Oregon. The result of this legislation would mean as an orchardist we would need to make certain that the pruning crew only works 40 hours per week, even if there is good weather to take advantage of. My employees like having the ability to work 6 or even 7 days per week when the weather is nice so that they can take time off when it is raining.

Long story short, this legislation will not help agricultural employees, it will likely reduce their wages, because we will either transition to other crops that require less skilled hand labor, or if it is possible hire more people to keep everyone at or under 40 hours per week.