

Horseshoe Bar Cattle Co.

Dale A. Smith
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House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4002 – Support for Livestock Exemption in Ag Overtime Legislation

Chair Hovey and Members of the Committee,

My Name is Dale Smith and I am a cattle producer in Wasco County, OR. I am writing to urge your consideration of a livestock exemption to HB 4002. The cattle industry is like no other sector of ag in Oregon where cattle are born around the clock during the calving season and require active management at all hours in every season.

Ranchers are unable to set the price for the cattle they raise to absorb increased regulatory costs. The economics of agriculture provide no other option except reducing labor to control costs by reducing worker hours to avoid accruing overtime; hiring a second shift to avoid accruing overtime; and moving operations outside of Oregon. These options are not favorable to the rancher with livestock dependent upon constant care and feeding. Shuttering a generational ranch due to excessive cost of production becomes top of mind with every added policy decision made by Legislators.

Without a livestock exemption to HB 4002 my business will be severely impacted, and I will not be able to continue to compensate the workers I employ at my current rate of compensation. Livestock operations have unique needs and any policy changes should continue to recognize the challenges for producers and the workforce. Beef and Dairy Cattle, sheep and other livestock rely on 24-hour supervision and response, requiring a flexible workforce year-round. During calving or lambing seasons, immediate care, regardless of time of day is essential for the health and safety of the animals.

Please protect Oregon livestock workers and include a livestock exemption in HB 4002.

Thank you,

Dale A. Smith