

Submitter: Cheryl Zentz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

I am writing in opposition to HB4002.

Farm workers should never get overtime. I grew up on a 300 acre farm and the work is cyclical and OT is part of the job, essential to getting crops in and animals fed. When a person chooses that life, that line of work, they know the hay still needs to be gotten in when the rains are coming, no matter how long a work day it's been. This Ag bill will destroy more small farms for certain. Farmers already have enough bureaucratic barriers that make farming costly and fraught with liabilities that would have been considered ABSURD 25 years ago. That's why we QUIT farming and sold our 4th generation family farm. And inflation is already horrendous. Does the State of Oregon deliberately want to create more HUNGER and food insecurity by increasing cost of agriculture production?

These ideas always sound good sitting in a meeting room at the state when a bunch of people who know nothing of being a farmer, are making the decisions. Even when stakeholders are present, their real concerns are rarely given thoughtful, in depth consideration, because often a state agency or department has already decided on their course of action and sadly public hearings are often a formality required by law. I hope this is not a similar process for legislative input. The way Oregon administrative rules were written in regard to land use planning and a multitude of other OARs written to implement ORS, have already obliterated many a family farm by prohibiting the children of farmers from being legally deeded a small a parcel of land to build a home on to live side-by-side and farm together with their parents and grandparents. As an adult child of a farmer, you can't get a bank loan to build a new home when you don't own the property. And exclusive Farm use land is considered commercial farmland and is subject to higher mortgage rates. Everything has been against family farming since the land use planning laws passed in the 1970s.

The laws that Oregon has passed and all of the requirements on farmers have made farming a wealthy persons occupation, where the small and medium-sized family farms can't survive and the land gets sucked up by large corporations and wealthy investors.

It's heartbreaking for the family farmers who spent thousands wading through the red tape of land use planning and measure 37 and 49 claims and the multi-generational family members still couldn't live on their own land. They have all the responsibility and none of the rights of land ownership. It's pretty messed up when a family of farmers work 80 to 100 years toiling, saving, sacrificing, to keep their family farm

going, and family members are not even allowed to build a home and live on the farm to continue farming together, and live on their own land. There wouldn't be a need for a farmer to hire workers to work overtime, if the children and grandchildren of small and medium Farms were allowed to live and work on their own land. This idiocy of only allowing one dwelling on 80-160 Acres of Exclusive Farm Use land destroyed multi-generational Farm families' ability to work together, pass on farming knowledge, and raise their families on their own land.

HB4002 is just one more thing to harm small and medium-sized family farmers who are just trying to get their crops in before they spoil or care for animals during peak times like lambing season.

Farming has never been an 8 to 5 job. Any person who goes into farming as a farmer or a day laborer knows this when choosing these occupations.

This overtime bill is just one more way to ensure that family Farmers don't stand a chance economically.

That's a NO on the AG overtime bill from this former farm girl.