Submitter: Madelena Bickley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Chair Holvey, members of the committee, my name is Madelena Bickley. I spent last summer driving tractor for Representative Boshart Davis, and I am planning to do so this summer as well.

I chose to work during harvest because I knew I could make more money in a shorter period of time than any other job accessible to me. I had no idea the impact it would have on my life and on what work means to me. Harvest employment gave me the opportunity to work hands-on with a variety of equipment and discover how much I enjoy it. I learned how to work as a team with other operators and take pride in a job well done. My coworkers and I were trusted to operate large and expensive machinery, and I quickly learned to appreciate that responsibility.

I am a college student, and many of my classmates have to choose between dedicating time to school and working during the term to pay for things like rent and textbooks. I don't have to make that decision. I made enough money last summer for me to work less than ten hours a week right now to pay for incidentals. The money I made from harvest work is the reason I can pay my rent and not stress about work versus keeping my grades up.

I understand that this bill is well-intentioned, but requiring workers like me to be paid overtime would not increase the amount of money I bring home. The reality is that I wouldn't make overtime pay, because my hours would be cut. Despite being willing to work, the company simply couldn't afford to pay me.

If I wanted to work retail, or fast food, or an office job over the summer, I would. Most of my friends do. It is my choice to work in agriculture. I choose to work long hours, because that's what it takes for this job to get done, and because I need the money that comes with those long hours. I am asking you not to pass this law, for me and for workers like me who need this unique opportunity that jobs in agriculture provide.

Thank you for your time.