

Submitter: LaJuana Decker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Please reject HB 4002. While its intent may be noble, the tragic truth about this misguided bill is that it will hurt not only small family farms, but also our local agricultural worker neighbors who rely on longer seasonal hours to support their families.

Big corporate farms will find a way to adjust, but that way is increasingly to rely on H2A workers (foreign guest workers). Small family farms cannot absorb these overtime costs, so they will be faced with two choices: sell out to big corporate farms or sign up through the big companies to hire foreign workers through their H2A programs.

Every way you look at it, the little guy loses. Small farms are driven to sell to big corporate farms. Our local ag workers end up with only 40 hour work weeks during the limited days of harvest, making it harder to feed their families the rest of the year. Some will find themselves displaced from the housing that farmers provide year round as farmers increasingly rely on seasonal foreign guest workers. With the cost of housing spiraling out of control, the housing crisis will be made worse for these families. In the end, they will make less money, and they could find themselves without homes in the off season as well, increasing the terrible housing crisis we already face in Oregon.

This is a bad bill made up by people who don't understand the agricultural industry, but the consequences to those who live and work in the industry could be devastating. Please make the compassionate choice: Reject this terrible bill.