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On Behalf Of: Boshart Trucking
Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor
Measure: HB4002

As a company committed to nurturing youth in agriculture, we specialize in mentoring youth and first-time employees. Our harvest season, by nature, is a brief period where additional labor is needed due to the maturation of the agricultural product. More labor is required during this time than that at any other time of year. Because of this harvest employees are temporary. For us, this niche is filled by folks who are seasonally available-students who are out of school.

Our harvest employees are primarily high school students; most of whom start with us with zero experience and few skills. These students often return as harvest help throughout their high school and collegiate careers. They return season after season for many reasons, one of which is because they can load their summer with work hours so that they can focus on their schoolwork during the school year. It is an attractive proposition to work 70 hours per week for the 6–8-week summer harvest season so that they do not have to work during the school year. It is difficult for most students to work even 10 hours per week while they are in school without jeopardizing their studies. A student who works 70 hours per week for 8 weeks in the summer works the same hours as a student who works ten hours a week all year round.

Requiring us to pay overtime for this short harvest season would result in a loss to these students. To keep costs steady, we would restrict employees to 40-hour work weeks and our employees would no longer be able to maximize their summer earnings. Students would be able to log far fewer hours under this system and may then need to work during the school year as well.

Though we pay above minimum wage to returning employees, and provide wage increases for increased knowledge and skills, this employment is simply not meant to be year-round. In short, our use of straight time for harvest is beneficial to both us and our employees. Our employees benefit from our mentoring. They learn how to operate equipment and gain the confidence that comes with learning something new outside their home environment. They learn how to communicate with supervisors, how to get to and from work on time, and how to work together. Teaching these skills to folks who have never worked takes time and is more expensive than hiring experienced labor. We choose to invest in students because doing so provides us with a steady stream of return workers who are available exactly when we need them-and when they need us-during non-school times.

Requiring overtime pay for this short harvest season, for positions which are not able

to be available year-round would be harmful to us and our student employees.

Please continue to allow an exemption to overtime for short-term harvest seasons so that we can continue to give these first-time employees the attention that sets the foundation for their growth as they graduate and enter the full-time workforce.