

Submitter: Janice Flegel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Farm Worker Overtime

Measure: HB4002

Chairs Holvey and Taylor and Committee Members,

My grandmother worked in the fields of the South during the 30's and 40's. When she was alive she talked about the days working in the fields she would say that the reason agriculture was exempt from overtime pay was the nature of working during the daylight hours. It is not because of the color of skin or mental ability. We are all working together in a field that we love. I have listened to much testimony as you all have. Ag overtime will not make farm employers be nice and value their workers, it will not make it possible for employees to be able to go to family functions and it will not keep ag workers from getting hurt. My son mentioned that people are working two jobs now because businesses don't want to pay over time and 40 hours a week just doesn't cover all the bills; especially with the very inflated price of housing and rising costs of food and fuel. If 9 to 5 businesses can't do it then how will farms? We had a worker years ago that wanted to work more hours than we were giving him because we were spreading the work load over 3 employees; he worked hard to get the other two to quit so he would have longer hours. We could not pay over time and thankfully we didn't have to then but you see a lot of these people want to be able to put in lots of hours during the summer so they can go back home in the winter. We have also hired field crew workers and have treated them like family, they still will say hi and embrace you when we see each other in the stores.

I ask that you work for a better solution than 4002A -A7. Please look at exempting piece work, livestock and salaried employees as well as have a seasonal aspect like a 12 week window of exemption. The refundable tax credit is not what we want because the big players are the ones that will be getting those funds not the small family farm. If you are unable to get us these 4 things then just kill this bill and let us deal with BOLI Commissioner Val Hoyle.

We need a real solution that keeps small farms viable.

Thank you, Janice Flegel