

My name is Joe Schumacher, my wife and I have been farming for over 50 years growing grass, vegetables and other crops in Linn County. Our sons and their families also farm in Oregon.

We strongly oppose HB 2548. This is a very negative bill for farm employers.

Right now, Oregon has some of the highest labor costs in the country. Farmers don't get to set our prices for our commodities, so we won't recover from any of the increased costs passed on to us by the new governing Board.

Farm workers in Oregon are currently protected by very strong workplace regulations such as paid sick leave and minimum wages. Oregon's OSHA has one of the highest worksite inspection rates and has adopted some of the most expansive workplace protections in the country. Farmers in general take good care of their employees whether they are full time employees or seasonal workers. Workers are essential to a farmer's daily operation. What is the real issue that this bill is trying to solve on farms and ranches throughout Oregon.

HB 2548 gives unelected bureaucrats who have most likely never set foot on any farm or ranch throughout Oregon the power to set our wages and safety rules that are already in place through OSHA reaching far beyond current protections, adding more regulations and cost burden to all farms. They will have no accountability for the decisions they make, even if their decisions close farms and cost the employees they want to protect to become unemployed.

We are strongly opposed to the proposal in HB 2548 that eliminates at-will employment for farms and branches. In any industry in Oregon if a worker is not capable of performing or chooses not to perform the job they can be fired or let go. With this bill we as the employer will be subject to actions against us that could lead to an attorney being involved in our decisions to terminate an employee.

This bill puts all of us at risk for costly claims for making the staffing decisions for our own businesses. All other private sectors in Oregon have at-will status, but we as farmers and ranchers whose employment needs are already impacted by weather, yields, trade and market conditions, pests, diseases would not. This bill is completely unfair to all industries and citizens in Oregon that are involved in agriculture. Think of the Saturday markets, the canneries, the meats and eggs you buy from local farms and ranches, the food in your stores. All those and many more are part of the Oregon farmers and ranchers.

Bill HB 2548 doesn't help the workers, many of whom want the jobs offered to them by farms and ranches. Why are they trying to push us to pay a higher minimum wage (\$20+) when no other industry in Oregon has that as a minimum wage? The only thing this bill will do is cut back on employees. We have already cutback workers hours just like other

industries that can't or don't want to pay overtime. Spent thousands of dollars to automate instead of hiring new employees. Eliminating crops that take many workers, those crops can be grown and harvested in other states or countries that don't have our regulations already.

HB 2548 is solely for the state of Oregon to make more money for their endless greed and control of the people of Oregon.

This bill doesn't even address how hard it is for Oregon farmers and ranchers to find good hard-working people and now this punishes those very people who they say this bill will protect.

I urge a NO vote on this disastrous bill that is set to ruin the lives of employers and employees in every aspect of agriculture in the state of Oregon.

Sincerely

Joe & Susie Schumacher