

Submitter: Jeff Roth
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548

Dear HCLWS,

My name is Jeff Roth, and I am one of the owners of a local farm (G&C Farms) that grows berries, grass seed, and hazelnuts.

There are a number of headwinds facing the agricultural sector at this point, including recent legislation regarding Overtime pay for farm workers, uncertainty caused by the new Federal Administration's Immigration policy, and newly enacted Tariffs. These all have a negative effect on the productivity and viability of family farms.

This is bill that will create added costs and complexity for farmers, and ultimately hurt the very people it purports to help - the farm laborer. We are already seeing our workers' hours being affected (limited) by the overtime rules, and they do not like it - these rules actually limit their ability to make money. Furthermore, higher labor costs translate to either (1) Automation, which hurts the farm worker, or (2) Consolidation, as farms go out of business (which also hurts the Farm Worker who is displaced as the business fails).

Our profit margins are low (if we make a profit at all). We do not have the ability to set prices and recover these costs - we are at the bottom of the proverbial "food chain", and are "price-takers", not "price-makers".

I agree with the additional points made by the Farm Bureau below.

Please oppose HB 2548.

Respectfully,

Jeff Roth
G&C Farms
Salem, OR

? HB 2548 gives unelected bureaucrats the power to set wages and safety rules that go far beyond current protections, adding more regulatory and cost burden to farms. There is no accountability for the decisions they make, even if their decisions ultimately close farms or result in layoffs.

? I am strongly opposed to the proposal in HB 2548 that eliminates at-will

employment

for farms and ranches. HB 2548 carves out farms and puts us at risk for costly claims for making necessary staffing decisions. All other private sectors in Oregon enjoy at-will status, but farms—whose employment needs are impacted by weather, yields, trade and market conditions, pests and diseases—would not. This is unfair.

? I urge you to vote no on HB 2548 to protect Oregon farms and ranches and the jobs

we currently provide.