



Crook County

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Letter of Opposition to House Bill 2548

Dear Members of the Legislative Committee,

I am writing to you as a representative of Crook County to formally express our opposition to House Bill 2548. This legislation, while possibly well-intentioned in its aim to address social injustices, fails to consider the severe repercussions it imposes on the agricultural backbone of Oregon, particularly on our family farms and broader agricultural community.

It is important to recognize that Oregon's agriculture sector is currently facing significant challenges due to recent legislative actions, such as the new overtime law and adjustments in corporate tax regulations. These have already placed a substantial financial strain on our agricultural businesses, impacting their operational sustainability without offering any viable means for cost absorption.

HB 2548, regrettably, appears to be a redundant measure, overlaying protections for farm workers that are already robustly in place. The bill introduces an unnecessary and costly bureaucratic layer that further burdens our farmers, ranchers, and taxpayers. It also alarmingly transfers critical management decisions from the knowledgeable hands of farm employers to a bureaucratic entity lacking in-depth understanding of agricultural operations.

Moreover, this bill threatens the viability of family farms and ranches by imposing undue legal expenses and operational restrictions, exacerbating the financial pressures on an industry that is already unable to adjust swiftly to increased labor and other costs.

The approach taken by HB 2548 reflects a disconnection from the realities of farming and ranching. It disregards the foundational principles and hard-won expertise of our agricultural professionals. This disconnect not only undermines the goodwill of these community pillars but also endangers their survival.

As a steward of Crook County's interests and a proponent of our agricultural heritage, I urge you to reconsider the implications of HB 2548. It is crucial for our legislators to engage directly with those most affected by such policies—the family farmers and ranchers themselves—to fully grasp the potential impacts of legislative decisions on their livelihoods and our community at large.

Please take the necessary time to understand the real-world effects of your decisions on the lives and futures of the people you serve. We ask for a legislative environment that supports the sustainability and growth of Oregon's agriculture, rather than one that jeopardizes it.

Thank you for considering our position on this critical matter.

Sincerely,

X 

Brian Barney
County Commissioner