

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

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 2548, which proposes the establishment of the Agricultural Workforce Labor Standards Board. While I acknowledge the importance of improving labor conditions and protecting workers' rights, I believe this bill may have unintended consequences that could negatively impact the agricultural sector and the economy as a whole.

Firstly, the establishment of a new board may lead to increased bureaucracy and regulatory burdens for farmers and agricultural businesses. The agricultural industry is already facing numerous challenges, including fluctuating market prices, climate change impacts, and labor shortages. Introducing additional regulations could further strain resources and hinder the ability of farmers to operate efficiently.

Moreover, the bill could inadvertently discourage labor supply in the agricultural sector. Many farmers rely on seasonal and migrant workers to meet their labor needs. The complexities introduced by a new oversight body may deter workers from seeking employment in agriculture, exacerbating the existing labor shortages that many farmers are already experiencing.

Additionally, I am concerned that this board could impose one-size-fits-all standards that do not account for the diverse nature of agricultural operations. Agriculture varies significantly across regions, types of crops, and business models. A standardized approach may not only be impractical but could also harm smaller farms that lack the resources to comply with stringent regulations.

Finally, it is crucial to consider the potential economic ramifications of this legislation. The agricultural sector is a vital part of our economy, providing jobs and contributing to local and state revenues. Overregulation could lead to increased costs for consumers, reduced competitiveness for our farmers, and potential job losses in the industry.

In conclusion, while the intentions behind HB 2548 may be well-meaning, I urge you to reconsider its implications. Instead of creating new regulatory bodies, we should focus on supporting existing programs that help improve labor conditions and empower farmers to thrive in a competitive market.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this important issue. I hope you will

take the necessary steps to oppose HB 2548 and work towards solutions that benefit both agricultural workers and the industry as a whole.