

Dear Chair Grayber and members of House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed bill HB 2548, which I believe will have a significant and detrimental impact on farmers and the agricultural community as a whole. As someone who has firsthand experience with the agricultural industry, I feel compelled to share how this measure threatens the livelihoods of those who work tirelessly to feed our nation.

1. **Increased Financial Burden:** The proposed policy introduces additional costs for compliance, equipment upgrades, and labor requirements. For many small and family-owned farms, these expenses are not sustainable. Margins in farming are already thin, and the added financial strain could drive many farmers out of business, leading to the consolidation of farmland by large corporations and the loss of rural jobs.
2. **Disruption to Supply Chains:** Farmers rely on established supply chains to transport goods efficiently. This regulation may introduce new restrictions or limitations on transportation, storage, or processing, resulting in delays, spoilage, and reduced market access. These disruptions will not only affect farmers but also consumers who depend on a stable food supply.
3. **Reduced Crop Yields and Livestock Productivity:** Certain environmental or land-use restrictions proposed in the policy may limit farmers' ability to use effective agricultural practices, such as crop rotation or controlled grazing. This can lead to reduced productivity, soil degradation, and an overall decline in farm output.
4. **Loss of Generational Knowledge and Culture:** Many farmers have inherited their land and skills from previous generations. The inability to adapt to costly or restrictive regulations could force families to abandon their farms. This not only erodes rural communities but also results in the loss of valuable agricultural knowledge and traditions.
5. **Impact on Local Economies:** Farming is often the backbone of rural economies. When farmers struggle, local businesses that support agriculture, such as equipment suppliers, feed stores, and local markets, also suffer. This can lead to widespread economic decline and job losses in rural areas.

In conclusion, while I understand the intent behind the proposed policy, I urge policymakers to consider the unique challenges faced by farmers. I advocate for collaborative solutions that support sustainable agriculture without placing undue hardship on those who work the land. I respectfully request that you engage with the farming community to develop alternative strategies that balance environmental stewardship with economic viability.

Sincerely,
Tricia Hafner