

I urge you to vote NO on HB 2548, which would create an appointed board to micromanage the relationship between Oregon's farmers and their employees. The board would have the authority to set wages, benefits and hours for employees. It would even micromanage hiring and firing decisions.

Oregon's farmers already struggle to stay afloat amid rising costs, fierce competition and heavy-handed regulation. In 2023, only 18% of Oregon small businesses surveyed said they believed state lawmakers cared about the success of their businesses. Overbearing legislation like HB 2548 goes a long way toward explaining that sentiment. It's no coincidence that CNBC in 2024 ranked Oregon the third least business-friendly state in the country.

This bill would make farming harder without helping consumers or, in all probability, workers. In 2022, in an attempt to raise the wages of farm workers, the Legislature agreed to phase-out the state's agricultural minimum wage exemption. The bill ended up lowering the pay of workers, just like farmers warned that it would. HB 2548 would set the stage for a new set of unintended consequences even as it made farming more difficult to sustain and the state less economically competitive.

Please leave farming to farmers and say NO to HB 2548.