

We STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 2548.

The -7 amendment to HB 2548 is a desperate attempt to breath life into a partisan bill under the claim of “farmworker advocacy.” HB 2548 is a trial lawyer’s dream! It transfers authority regarding wage scale and termination employment decisions from Ag employers to an un-elected bureaucracy – paid by taxpayers.

A ‘study’ by a liberal leaning university with guidelines set by anti-farmer advocates can not and will not fairly examine true workplace protections. In addition, most of the standards that they intend to study are safeguards that are already in place and are monitored by state and federal entities.

Oregon has the strongest labor laws in the nation, which already apply to farm workers. Much of HB 2548 replicates rules that are already in place. Oregon law currently allows at-will employment for virtually all industries. Why should the agricultural sector be forced into even more stringent requirements overseen by unelected bureaucrats? How could an unelected board have any way to fully understand the complexities of managing a specific agricultural business, let alone the hundreds of different types of farms and ranches that exist in Oregon.

In closing we question what qualifies the need for this Board as an “emergency” except that it allows the government to fast track a Bill to appease a small but vocal group of people.

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