

Submitter: Carrie Reeves
On Behalf Of: Oppose HB 4002
Committee: Joint Committee On Farm Worker Overtime
Measure: HB4002

I manage my family's cherry and pear orchard and have year round and seasonal workers who have worked on our farm for generations. HB 4002A, the ag overtime proposal, is very concerning with the potential impact to our family farm and to the livelihood of our workers. We compensate all of our workers well with above minimum wage pay, free housing, vehicles and bonuses. Despite rising costs of labor and all materials, we are not able to increase the price we receive for our fruit. Our fruit is sold in a global market and prices are dictated to us by supply/demand. Some years, we are already losing money. Any added costs are absorbed by our family's farm.

I am also concerned about the negative impact this bill would have on farm employees. Employees will see their hours reduced if overtime pay is required for work more than 40-hours per week. Additionally, our farm would no longer be financially able to pay for all of my workers housing/expenses, vehicles and bonuses. This would be detrimental to the workers. It would also have a negative impact on my small farm where labor is already VERY difficult to find. I provide housing, bonuses etc, to attract people to work for me. If I can no longer financially provide these incentives, I may lose my workforce and be unable to care for the orchard and harvest our crop.

A tax credit is a short term band-aid. Our farm is labor intensive, especially during the spring and harvest season. No mechanization or other cost reducing systems exist. If we can no longer afford (or find) labor - our business will no longer be viable.

Our farm is third generation. Despite the many obstacles we face every year, our family loves what we do. We love the land we take care of and the people with work with. This bill has the potential to end all of this for us. I urge you to oppose an overtime mandate at 40-hours in HB 4002A. Please VOTE NO ON HB 4002A!