



A&R SPADA FARMS LLC

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Senate Workforce Committee and House Business and Labor Committees,

I am writing you this letter today to voice my opposition to all of the proposed bills relating to increasing Oregon's minimum wage.

My name is Angelo Spada. My family's farm, A & R Spada Farms is located in and around St. Paul, Oregon. I am a third generation farmer and one of the owners of A & R Spada Farms. We currently have the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th generations working on our farm and nursery. We currently have about 2100 acres under cultivation, and we ship our nursery products to more than 40 states and all 6 Canadian provinces. The revenue we generate from this business helps to fuel Oregon's economy with out-of-state trade dollars.

We employ approximately 150 people during our peak busy season and about 100 people all year round. Our farm competes both nationally and internationally with other farms and nurseries from all across the U.S. and Canada. Historically we have been able to compete successfully in large part due to the favorable weather, soil, and growing conditions in the Willamette Valley; however, over the last several years we have seen dramatic increases in our costs from a variety of sources. Those cost increases include: higher labor costs, which have come from Oregon's already ever increasing minimum wage that is indexed to inflation; higher energy costs; higher fertilizer and crop protectant costs; higher health insurance costs; higher freight costs; higher equipment costs; and the list could continue to include nearly everything that we purchase to keep our farm running and our crops growing.

Our business simply cannot absorb any of the proposed minimum wage increases, and we are not in a position where we would be able to pass any of the increased costs onto our customers. We compete nationally and internationally with other farms and nurseries, so our customers have many choices of where to purchase the plant material they desire. Oregon's current minimum wage is already the 3rd highest in the nation, and that reality already has us looking to mechanize our processes as much as possible.

We strongly encourage a NO vote on all of the proposed minimum wage rate increases on the table. Passing any one of the proposed bills, and certainly all of the proposed bills, will jeopardize Oregon's recovery and make our local businesses un-competitive in the national and international marketplaces. Oregon's Willamette Valley offered our ancestors many natural growing advantages over other parts of the country and world with its mild climate, fertile soil, and ample rain fall; please do not negate these natural advantages by passing these bills and creating a legal environment that makes it too expensive to farm some of the most fertile soil on the Earth.

Sincerely,

Angelo Spada