



From the Desk of  
Senator  
Bill Hansell

## **Oregon Farm Bureau Requests Your OPPOSITION to SB 454-B**

SB 454-B unduly burdens Oregon's agricultural producers, who cannot afford to pay employees when they are not working. Many farmers rely on a seasonal workforce at critical times to harvest crops, and SB 454-B does not account for the unique nature of agriculture--Oregon's second largest economic driver.

When faced with a mandate like paid sick leave, many small employers will make the difficult choice of raising prices, reducing employee hours or removing other benefits. This is not a choice for farmers. Unlike other business sectors, farmers do not have the option of increasing their prices. Farmers and ranchers are "price takers," meaning that the prices of the goods they produce are set by the commodity market. Increasing prices is not an option. SB 454-B would force farmers to reduce the investments they make in their farms or take a financial loss. Oregon's agricultural producers operate on tight margins, and any reduction in revenue could impact the viability of the family farm.

SB 454-B fails to account for the unique needs of agriculture. While many farmers offer employees flexibility, farmers have few choices for replacements when an employee is absent. This issue is emphasized during the critical time of harvest. A mandated paid sick leave policy reduces certainty that those workers will be available to ensure that perishable crops can be picked at the optimal time.

Additionally, SB 454-B would require complicated tracking of employees' hours, creating a paperwork nightmare for family farmers. Many farmers use extra workers during harvest. Keeping track of hours for each worker is difficult when a farm is employing over 100 workers, and those workers quickly move to other farms. Many family farmers also act as the human resources department on their farm, and increased paperwork will increase costs for these small businesses. These concerns were not addressed in SB 454-B.

Oregon Farm Bureau asks that you OPPOSE this legislation. Agriculture is a unique industry, and SB 454-B imposes costs that family farmers cannot afford.

**Please vote "NO" on SB 454-B**

For more information contact: Katie Fast or Jenny Dresler