



## Senate Workforce & General Government

### Oregon Farm Bureau opposes SB 1532 -13 amendments

February 5, 2016

Chair Dembrow and members of the Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to speak to the -13 amendment to Senate Bill 1532. As a reference, Oregon Farm Bureau is the state's largest general agriculture association, representing over 7,000 farming and ranching families and over 60,000 members statewide.

Farm Bureau did not support this the Governor's proposal that included two tiers of wages. And while we express our appreciation for the Senate's consideration of the economic differences between urban and rural Oregon, we cannot support the -13 amendment. Rural communities, where many of Oregon's farmers are based, certainly have a lower cost of living than urban centers like Portland. However, we do not believe the -13s address those differences in an economically or geographically sound way.

The economy of Oregon is not divided along county lines; indeed, many of our farms are not divided along county lines. For example, eastern Deschutes County's economy is no different than northern Klamath County's economy, but this proposal would arbitrarily divide those counties into two separate wage schedules. Thus, the -13 provision that separates the state into tiers along county lines is incredibly concerning.

We also refer you to our comments from the February 2, 2016 hearing on SB 1532. With limited ability to recoup increased operations costs, the tiers on the -13s are too high for rural and farm employers that already struggle with the current indexed minimum wage.

For information, please contact Jenny Dresler at [jenny@oregonfb.org](mailto:jenny@oregonfb.org).



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