

Dear Senators Cliff Bentz and Kathleen Taylor and Representatives Jeff Barker and Lynn Findley,

I am a co owner of a small business in eastern Oregon. We are a ranch that has employees with rare, highly specialized skills needed to accomplish the work. Skills like being able to safely ride a horse, safely and humanely rope a cow in brushy country, understand how a cow thinks, understand when an animal isn't feeling well and what to do about it, understand how much to feed the animals be be at optimum nutrition, how to care for the grass that takes care of us, how to safely feed animals, safely operate and maintain mechanical heavy equipment, and be pleasant and safe for others to work with. Furthermore, it takes about a year for an employee to learn the geography of the landscape in order to accomplish the cattle movements. It isn't like I can easily hire someone to come work for 8 months in a repetitive task in a 5 square yard area of a factory. House Bill 3031 would create serious hardships on all of us on the ranch, trying to fill in for a vacancy. The reason a position is available on our ranch is because there is that much work that needs to get done. We don't employ extra people. We don't have a list of substitutes like a school. If more than one person were on this extended leave, I would seriously consider selling the family ranch. IF I could hire a temporary replacement, I would then have to pay unemployment to the terminated temporary when the permanent position person returned to work. That would involve extra expense as my unemployment rates would increase. Furthermore, the rest of us would still have a lot of "extra" to do to fill in for the temporary's lack of knowledge about the ranch. We highly value our skilled employees and understand the contribution they make to putting food on the table for you and the rest of the world. We take compassionate care of our employees and already work with them on an individual as needed basis. Having the state create a one size fits all law is not necessary. Please don't make it more difficult for us to feed a growing population. Oregon is already imposing some extremely frightening costs and regulations on our ability to produce food. Please don't add HB 3031 to the lot. Is it Oregon legislature's intent to eliminate the family farm? Please vote NO on HB 3031.

Sincerely,

Susan Doverspike