

Hello,

My name is Tyler Meskers, a 32 year old farmer, husband, and father of three children Kase (4yrs) and Beckham (2yrs) and Vivian (6months). I want to speak with you regarding the House Bill 2358. As I read the proposal, I see it directly affecting our family farm. In agriculture, working 40+ hours per week is normal, it is a lifestyle we enjoy. Our employees are used to, and enjoy, working 40-55 hours per week at our business. Over the years, we've created a invaluable team which take pride in their work and enjoys working for our family farm. Their wage is well above industry standards. Our crew relies on our business to support them with a good wage, and a healthy work environment. Something we've done in our 30+ years of business.

The flower industry is changing. Our family business is one of the last in the country. More than 80% of our flowers are imported from Colombia, Holland or Ecuador. This bill will put more pressure on our already struggling industry, forcing more flowers to be imported. Our country demands a healthy, environmentally conscience product. This bill will put many domestic flower growers out of business forcing more flowers to be grown out of this country. California is a good example of this.

Oregon Flowers, Inc. was build by my Dutch immigrant parents. They have worked incredibly hard in order to give their children the chance to continue our family business. I want to make sure I can continue a strong business for my children, just as my parents Martin and Helene did for me. This Overtime bill proposal will definitely challenge the future of Oregon Flowers, Inc. as it will directly affect the cost of employment and stress the work relationship our business has with its team. We simply can not afford an overtime bill. If passed, we would be forced to limit hours, also limiting production.

I urge you to consider our business, and many other businesses like ours, when discussing an overtime bill. By forcing farmers to pay overtime, it is likely the last few flower farms will fall and more product will be forced to South America. We simply ask our politicians to keep our family business and its future in mind when creating such a deal.