



IDAHO-OREGON FRUIT AND VEGETABLE ASSOCIATION

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Business and Labor Committee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Business and Labor Committee Members:

The Idaho-Oregon Fruit & Vegetable Association (IOFVASN) represents approximately 32 vegetable and fruit packinghouses in Idaho and Eastern Oregon. It was formed primarily to give service to these companies in matters pertaining to transportation, labor and other relative industry problems.

HB 2358 would be detrimental to the members of the IOFVA. HB 2358 proposes the most aggressive overtime policy in the country, which would be devastating for local farmers and their employees, who are already struggling financially. Currently, agriculture is exempt from overtime pay under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and in most other states because of the unique seasonal nature of agricultural production, affecting both the total period when agricultural activities can be pursued and the days within the "season" when work can be performed.

Our members cannot simply increase the sale price of their crops to account for added labor costs. Consumers set the prices today, and they will buy from other states or countries that sell at a cheaper price. Most of the IOFVASN Members will have to absorb any added overhead, adding increased stress on their business. Additionally they will be forced to limit the number of hours, at times making it difficult for the companies to conduct business and actually bring the crops in from the fields.

Our members will have to absorb any added overhead. That's the economic reality they deal with every day. HB 2358 demands wages that are not possible with the economics of agriculture and will result in reduced pay and hours for farm employees. The IOFVASN is very concerned that this policy hasn't been well-vetted and will actually harm those it intends to help.

Please oppose HB 2358 this session. This bill would negatively impact not only family farmers and ranchers in Oregon, but all agricultural workers!

Sincerely,

Candii Fitch
Executive Director