

3/8/21

Mr. Chair and Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor, my name is Steve Burke and I live in Klamath Falls.

Subject

HB 2358

Public Hearing

It is my understanding that this proposed bill prohibits agricultural employers from having crews work more than 40 hours in a single work week without compensating the crew for overtime.

I strongly disagree with the proposed HB 2358 for the following reasons:

1. A 40 hour work week has nothing to do with farming and especially the harvest. Many agricultural duties are time sensitive (especially planting, pruning and harvesting). Days are long and weeks are long when this occurs. It is not unusual for a crew to be required for 12 hour days/7 days a week during these periods.
2. There is only so much revenue that can be generated from a crop. Paying overtime raises the cost of the crop. This cost must be passed on to the consumer. Things are high enough already – as you will notice at the grocery store – especially since January this year.
3. The farmer may not or won't be able to sell his crop if production and harvest are too high. This is especially true these days where so much of our food on the market comes from outside our borders where farm labor is cheap.
4. Lastly, people need to be free to make their own choices. If a crew member does not want to work more than 40 hours a week for straight time then he can arrange this ahead of time with the farmer. I doubt this will ever happen, people need work.

I have worked in private industry all my life (exception, State temp jobs while in college). I have put in more overtime (when needed) than I care to think about. The reason – I have had to work for a living. Most people are fine with this until someone comes around telling all that they should not be doing it. That is where the real trouble lies – the person spreading the word that “things ought to be different” is the real trouble maker – and typically someone who does not want to work with their hands – they like to run things.

Well I say let that person demanding more pay for the same work **“try it out on their own to see if they can make this idea fly in a competitive world”**. **They will not succeed.**

Respectfully  
Steve Burke  
Klamath Falls