

My name is Robert Crouse and I farm in Josephine County. I raise corn, alfalfa, row crops, sell vegetables through my farm stand and operate a corn maze pumpkin patch on 450 acres of owned and rented land. I employ up to 25 people during the peak season. Some of my employees come back year after year and work enough hours during the season to make up for the slow time of year.

HB 2358 would have a large negative impact on my operation. Just during my 13 week busy season the overtime would have cost me \$41,405 more in wages not including the employer share of taxes and benefits. With my share of taxes and benefits the cost would have been just over \$53,000. Last year was a profitable year and that would have taken over half of my net income. In a bad year or normal year I would have gone backwards with a negative income.

As a farmer I am a price taker and cannot absorb the extra cost into my business. As minimum wages have gone up I have tried to pass on some of the extra cost through the farm stand and corn maze pumpkin patch, but this is only a part of my business and cannot absorb all the cost as people will go to the grocery stores which can buy produce from states that have lower wages allowing farmers to produce cheaper.

As you know labor is hard to get, there are help wanted signs all over town in Grants Pass, I have to compete with those for labor.

Robert J. Crouse  
President  
Fort Vannoy Farms, Inc.