

I am Spencer Frahm and am a 3rd generational farmer living near Ontario. I urge you to reconsider the overtime bill. It is not farmer friendly and does not take in account the occupation of a farm employee. There are busy times during the year and slack times. There are busy times during a day and slack times during an individual day. Harvest and planting are very busy. During irrigation season, the morning is busy and then later at 6pm because we change our water on 12 hour sets. This does not compare to other jobs. We still need to keep our employees busy for 10 hours to keep them as employees, but they are not doing hard work all day long.

I propose that overtime starts after 60 hours a week, plus opting out 6 weeks in the spring for planting and 6 weeks in the fall for harvest. The idea of phasing in overtime does not work, because after 3 years the elephant will appear again. Most farm employees are happy and treated well. If overtime is implemented, we will cut benefits we offer now. We now supply vehicles to drive and pay the gas, we provide full employment during the winter, sick pay for all and they all receive higher than minimum wage. These benefits will be eliminated or greatly reduced. When we cut hours to stay within the 40 hours a week, which we will, the amount of sick pay will greatly reduce also.

Farmers near us are installing large irrigation pivots to reduce the workers they will need, anticipating Oregon's lack of knowledge of how a farm operates.

We urge you to research this matter more thoroughly and give the farmers time to testify. I tried to testify at an earlier hearing and very few actual farmers were allowed to testify and the hearing was closed. Thank you, Spencer Frahm