

My name is Mark Ward and I am a potato grower in Baker County. I am writing today in opposition to HB 2358. This bill would be another significant burden to the profitability and sustainability of our operation during these uncertain times and very thin profit margins in all of our commodities.

It is without question that it is often necessary to work more than forty hours per week, especially during harvest when we are at the mercy of the weather and must work an average of 65 hours per week to get our potato crop into storage in a timely manner to be able to deliver a quality product to our customers, the potato processors.

We cannot pass this cost on to our customers, we grow under a negotiated preseason contract that will be down 3% this year with costs of production increasing 4%. We cannot absorb any more financial burdens in the current market environment.

Mark Ward