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On Behalf Of: 65000 members working natural resources
Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor
Measure: HB4002

Mandating Ag overtime was introduced in the 2021 session. It was killed then, so I don't know why it's back again? Are you trying to crush the local economy and family farms to death? Are you aware that you're actually removing jobs rather than creating them. Over regulation does not create jobs or fair wages.

HB 4002 has even higher stakes this time. There WILL BE A LAWSUIT, bypassing the Legislative process, which will force overtime mandates through Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI) IF compromise can not be reached. And the working family farms in Oregon are the collateral damage. How is this fair and equitable?

This issue is incredibly complex already and is now more challenging by the staggering diversity in Oregon Agriculture. Oregon grows 225 different commodities. No two farms are the same, and neither are their staffing requirements—making a one-size-fits-all blanket approach DEVASTATING for most of Oregon's family owned farms.

Did you know 95% of farms are family owned. This will hurt our local rural economies, kill our farms and break our pocketbooks. This will also significantly impact employees and their paychecks, the very workers whom you claim you are "trying to help". It will
In fact result in less jobs, less wages, less benefits and less farming operations...so again, are you really trying to help?

Is this the government's way of picking winners and losers again?

Some key points to strongly consider:

*Agriculture has seasonality. It's weather dependent and limited by the perish-ability of our produce. Farming doesn't get done in a typical 9-5.

*Just like trucking, family farms can't pass along added labor costs. Unlike most industries, farms' prices get set by the GLOBAL commodity market. They can't raise their price just because costs go up, and again they have to compete globally. Where other countries don't pay a living wage, don't pay SAIF, HOW DO WE COMPETE? Does Oregon want the farming industry to leave the State or the country like INTEL?????

*Other states' mandates have led to capped hours and lower paychecks. Farms are

forced to invest in mechanization and cap employees' hours to reduce labor costs. That in turn means less workers and less wages? Is that the ultimate goal?

*Farms will be forced to reduce benefits to offset labor cost increases. Most farms provide benefits beyond an hourly wage, but those incentives are not being considered. Smaller farms are the least able to absorb added labor costs.

Sounds to me like you are essentially killing the farming industry in Oregon, under the guise of equity but that isn't actually equitable at all! No on HB 4002. We can do better for Oregon farms and working families.