

Submitter: Barry Shullanberger
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor
Measure: HB4002

I am submitting written testimony to oppose HB 4002 related to ag overtime. We have many small to medium sized ranches and farms in south central Oregon. The majority of the labor needed is during the summer months when the growing season is for producing and harvesting crops and many livestock duties. Much of the labor force consists of unskilled entry level workers who are learning the many skills needed to perform multiple duties while on the job. With minimum wage rates continuing to climb, and some farms and ranches having to pay above minimum wage to attract labor workers, then to add overtime on top of this is too much and the costs of labor then out weigh the returns on the investments. This would also force many small farms and ranches to contract the work to let other businesses figure out the labor cost issues. This strategy can many times not be cost effective, and a lack of contractors to perform the work in a timely manner is bad for the producer trying to make a living.

If HB 4002 were to pass, this would give farmers and ranchers an unfair advantage to other western states to try to make a living. We want to make smart decisions for what keeps Oregon competitive and not be a place where no one can afford to operate an agricultural business. I ask that you oppose this bill and keep Oregon a place where we can compete with the rest of the western states to put food on the table for everyone without destroying our small farms and ranches, a critical economic boost to our small rural towns that helps make us function. In Lake County, farming and ranching is in our top two sources of income along with timber. This is the livelihood of many people in our county. HB4002 would put a nail in the coffin and economically be crippling to many producers.

Please consider all the small to medium producers this bill would affect.

Barry Shullanberger
Lake County Commissioner