

Submitter: Kara Unger

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

I farm in Washington County. I grow berries and employ up to 150 employees, many of whom come back to my farm year after year. I am concerned about the impact that ag overtime would have on my farm and employees. We would decrease employee hours and hire more employees should an Overtime bill be passed. This would mean less work and pay for those already employed. This applies also to piece rate work, which is already at market highs. Any added labor costs will have to be absorbed by my family's farm.

Oregon's specialty crops are labor intensive and have peak seasonal needs, including harvesting, pruning, and planting. This bill will likely cost me \$0.5M in new labor costs that I can't afford. To remain in business, I will be forced to limit the number of hours that employees work to 40 hours per week, mechanize or transition to less labor-intensive crops to avoid the added expense of overtime pay. I do not want to do this, but that is the practical reality.

As a family business, we can't operate at a loss year-over-year. Mandating overtime after 40-hours demands wages that are not possible with the economics of agriculture and will result in reduced pay and opportunities for farm employees. Several states have adopted policies to meet seasonal needs and others established higher overtime thresholds that help avoid some of the worst consequences.

As someone who stands to lose their 4th generation farm, I urge you to oppose an overtime mandate at 40-hours.