

Submitter: Kathy Hadley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Members of the Business & Labor Committee:

I farm in Polk County. I grow/raise a variety of field crops and beef cattle. I am concerned about the impact that HB 4002 would have on my & especially neighboring farms and employees. Farmers want happy employees, and do everything they can to compensate employees fairly - we know we cannot cover all our acres without help! As a farmer, however, I cannot increase the sale price of my crops when labor costs increase.

Oregon's specialty crops are labor intensive and have peak seasonal needs, including harvesting, pruning, and planting. For many farms to remain in business with these labor intensive crops, we will be forced to limit the number of hours that employees work to 40 hours per week to avoid the added expense of overtime pay. I do not want to do this, but that is the reality - owners & family will either pick up the slack or bring in a 2nd crew/shift, or look to merchandizing where we can, even if it somewhat impacts quality.

Farmers have been clear about the consequences of this policy, but I'm also worried that farm employees will see their paychecks reduced or jobs cut if overtime pay is required after 40-hours. The ones who have thought this proposal through certainly are concerned - it does not help them as its writers and proponents claim.

We do not have to jump on this policy just because our neighboring states have - in fact, its helped up with labor somewhat because seasonal farmworkers know they can make more in Oregon right now, not having those caps in place! Please do not hurt these farmworkers or our family Farms by mandating overtime pay over 40 hours. I urge you to oppose HB 4002.