

Submitter: Matthew Cook

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

Testimony

My name is Matthew Cook, and I am a 4th generation vegetable farmer in the Willamette Valley.

My questions for you today are:

1. Do you want to increase inflation in our state for food?
2. Do you want to more empty shelves in grocery stores?
3. Do you want to unemployment increase in the ag sector?
4. Do you want families who work in the ag sector getting paid less and losing opportunities for work?

The truth is, if mandatory overtime in the harvest season becomes a law all these things will happen. Farms will be forced to stop growing vegetable crops which have a short harvest season, they will go to more mechanized operations to decrease labor costs, and keep employees below 40 hrs.

The cost of growing food in our state is already much more expensive due to one of the highest minimum wages in the US, and continued increased taxation and regulation. Also, bringing in imported foods from countries who pay their employees a fraction of what we pay ours, makes it extremely difficult to move our product for a fair value.

Governor Kate Brown stated she wanted to help working families in this legislative short session. This bill will not do that. It will gravely hurt working families in this state.

I am asking you to set aside this bill this legislative session to reconsider,

1. Not making over time mandatory during the harvest season
2. Looking at ways to support our local farmers to provide food locally, by taxing imports like we are taxed for our exports

Thank you for your time.