

Submitter: Maria Hall

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor

Measure: HB4002

I own and operate a hazelnut farm in Yamhill County. I am not against people being paid fair wages for their work. I pay my farm employee, including the benefit of free housing, over \$60,000 a year. He gets 2 weeks of paid vacation plus federal holidays, plus an annual bonus. I feel I am very generous with him and believe he feels he is being compensated very fairly. BUT, agriculture is a very unique situation. There are times in the winter months when I can barely keep him busy enough and his hourly wages reflect that. However, things pick up in the spring and summer, and of course all bets are off at harvest. Everyone pitches in and works until dark if needed. If I had to pay time and a half for the long days associated with harvest, the farm wouldn't make it. If I was forced to pay time and a half, I would contract out the labor leaving my worker stuck at 40 hours, where he would make less money.

Farmers, unlike restaurant and manufacturing owners, don't get to pass along their extra costs to the consumer. At least not in my kind of farming. We are either bound by a contract made months or years in advance, or we are at the mercy of the international market. For example, we still don't know the final price for our hazelnut crop for this year. It was harvested 4 months ago. This is a not a one size fits all situation. Maybe some sectors of agriculture would work with an overtime format, but many will not. Because this bill doesn't distinguish between these possibilities, it is not a good bill and would make bad law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maria Hall.