

Submitter: Amanda Staehely  
On Behalf Of: Columbia Nursery  
Committee: House Committee On Business and Labor  
Measure: HB4002

February 8, 2022  
HB 4002 Ag Overtime Bill

Committee Members,

I want to first thank you for giving me a chance to comment my concerns on HB 4002 regarding overtime pay for agriculture employees. I wanted to give you an insight on how this bill would negatively affect our business and our employees. My husband and I are nursery owners in Canby, Oregon and employ eight fulltime employees as well as up to 10 other seasonal workers. We have a small 80 acre nursery and about 90% of our production is shipped out of state.

Our employees are more than people who work for us. We consider them our friends and care about their wellbeing and their families. We have employees who have been with us for years. We try and compensate our employees as best as we can throughout the year with at least two raises and normally two bonuses as well. None of our employees are paid minimum wage and are all offered medical and dental benefits as well. Our employees also work an average of 40 to 45 hours a week during the year. During a seasonal period we reach 50 to 55 hours a week. No hours are mandatory. They choose to either work the extra hours or not. Sometimes they work the overtime and sometimes they do not. The ones that choose to do the overtime WANT the overtime. They look forward to the extra hours. If we were required to pay overtime on those hours, it would not be an option. We could get away with cutting those hours from our employees and finding other solutions to make up that work. It is not what we would like to do, but would be the most financially feasible for us.

When we need the most time from our employees is also when most of our expenses are for the nursery. Our cash flow is the slowest at that time. It would definitely be a financial strain for us if we were to keep the greater hours with overtime pay. We would also have to cut the bonuses that our employees have come to expect from us every year. The two bonuses are greater than what they would receive in overtime pay. But by paying it later in the season after receiving payments for material, it makes it possible for us to give it to them at that time. The end result if this bill passes would be cut hours for our employees...clear and simple. It would average out to about \$700 per employee per overtime month in cut pay. I know for a fact that this would be detrimental to their livelihood. And I also know that none of my employees are in favor of what the consequences of this bill would cause.

I can imagine and respect the concern for agricultural laborers and appreciate the efforts attempted to be made with this bill. Unfortunately it doesn't just not help, but actually will hurt the very people you are trying to aid. That and it will be harmful to

the nursery industry in Oregon as a whole.

I encourage you to listen and find a compromise on this bill with agricultural employers. If you have any questions, I would be more than happy to answer them.

Please feel free to reach me at (503)263-2623

Thank you for your time,

Amanda Staehely, Columbia Nursery