

February 9, 2022

House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4002 – Support for Livestock Exemption in Ag Overtime Legislation

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

My name is Andy VanderPlaat. My family and I are cattle producers near Pendleton, Oregon. I am writing to urge you to include a livestock exemption to HB 4002. The cattle industry is like no other sector of ag in Oregon where cattle are born around the clock during the calving season and require active management at all hours in every season to keep them safe and healthy.

Ranchers are unable to set the price for the cattle they raise to absorb increased regulatory costs. The economics of agriculture provide no other option except reducing labor to control costs by reducing worker hours to avoid accruing overtime; hiring a second shift to avoid accruing overtime; or moving operations outside of Oregon. These options are not favorable to the rancher with livestock dependent upon constant care and feeding. Putting a generational ranch out of business due to excessive cost of production becomes top of mind with every added policy decision made by Legislators. We are a family owned business, not a large corporation that can pass on or absorb these additional costs. We compensate our employees fairly otherwise they would find employment elsewhere.

Without a livestock exemption to HB 4002 me and my family's operations will be severely impacted, and we will not be able to compensate our workers at the current rate of compensation or possibly even keep them employed. Livestock operations have unique needs and any policy changes should continue to recognize the challenges for producers and the workforce. Beef and Dairy Cattle, sheep and other livestock rely on 24-hour supervision and response, requiring a flexible workforce year-round. During calving or lambing seasons, immediate care, regardless of time of day is essential for the health and safety of the animals.

Please protect Oregon livestock workers and our family operations by including a livestock exemption in HB 4002.

Thank you,

Andy & Karen VanderPlaat, KA Ranch
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