

Submitter: Donna Bleiler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Farm Worker Overtime

Measure: HB4002

I OPPOSE HB 4002A

Mandating Ag overtime was introduced in the 2021 session, and was one of many threats against agriculture and the stakes are even higher with a lawsuit trying to bypass the Legislative process and force overtime mandates through Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI). This is a complex issue, made even more challenging by the staggering diversity in Oregon Agriculture (225 different commodities grown!). No two farms are the same, and neither are their staffing requirements—making a one-size-fits-all approach to overtime devastating for most Oregon's farms.

Big government needs to let free market work. Over protecting immigrants that come to work the fields can sign their own agreement to work longer hours in peak harvest because when the harvest is done, there is no work. Farms are forced to invest in mechanization and cap employees' hours to reduce labor costs. Farms will be forced to reduce benefits to offset labor cost increases. Most farms provide benefits beyond an hourly wage, but those incentives are not being considered. 95% of Oregon farms are family-owned businesses. Smaller farms are the least able to absorb added labor costs. This bill will hurt the two groups of people this legislature is so intent to protect.