

Date: February 23, 2022

From: Eleanor Marie Mueller

Re: HB 4002A—Overtime compensation for agricultural workers

Co-Chairs Taylor and Holvey, and Members of the Joint Committee on Farm Worker Overtime:

Please vote yes for HB 4002A.

Oregonians need the products provided by our farms, orchards, and forests. The workers, whether US citizens or legally hired immigrants, should be treated like the rest of us: 40-hour work weeks, with overtime pay if the hours are longer.

I also do not think that managers should force a worker to continue past the 40-hour limit. Nor should they threaten him or her with firing if more hours are refused. Agricultural work is outside in all weathers, is highly physical, and (from what I've read) breaks are few and short. Restrooms, sanitary facilities, and housing are often of poor quality. Tired workers are more likely to be injured on the job and cannot perform at top capacity.

If the farmer/rancher needs further work, a second shift crew should be hired. I do not favor adding hours to a day to get the work done on time, but I also know that when agricultural products are "ripe," they need immediate processing. Pay appropriately for extra hours spent to deal with ripe produce and pay overtime when it is necessary and the worker is willing.

Please vote YES.

*E. Marie Mueller*

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