

Jeff McNerney
McNerney Farms Inc.
5015 Green Rd., Hood River, OR 97031

Oregon House Committee
Re: HB 2548

Dear committee members,

As the president of McNerney Farms I am asking that you **oppose HB 2548**. McNerney Farms is a diversified fruit farming operation in Hood River Valley. Our operations consist of approximately 250 acres of pears, 130 acres of cherries, 60 acres of blueberries and 20 acres of apples.

I am fiercely adamant that Oregon does all it can to try to insure the future of family farms. **If we as farmers don't get some relief from burdensome regulations** that we currently have such as OR-OSHA increased housing rules and ag overtime mandates then we are going to continue to struggle. Throw in a new board dealing with Workforce Standards with HB 2548 then it may be time to let Argentina, Canada and South Africa produce pears for the USA. I guess we as farmers in Hood River can lobby like hell to change land use zoning laws, sell our farm ground to trophy home buyers, and we'll turn beautiful Hood River Valley into another Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Unlike most businesses, we as fruit farmers cannot increase the price of our products and in turn pass them onto the consumer. Any increased revenues tend to go to the Walmarts and Coscos of the world. Our input costs go up and our margins go down.

Farmers in Oregon just need the state bureaucracy to leave us alone and let us grow some of the best produce in the world. In a free market, capitalistic environment like we have in America, workers are free to go and please as they so choose and we as employers must provide good working conditions and competitive wages or we will not have the workforce to grow profitable crops. It works itself out. I've seen it for years. **Operations that take care of their employees and reward them and allow vested interests in the farms tend to succeed**. Operations that don't do this, will, on a low margin product like fruit, eventually end up selling or leasing their farms. **We don't need Big Brother government dictating how to run our business**.

Again, **I urge you to oppose HB 2548 if you wish to keep farms and open spaces into the future in rural Oregon**.

Sincerely,
Jeff McNerney
Pres. McNerney Farms Inc.

