

Submitter: Maria Hall  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2548

I grow hazelnuts in Yamhill County. Despite my best efforts, including utilizing my own unpaid labor, I find it difficult to turn a profit in farming. I have no choice but to utilize labor, fuel, fertilizer, other expensive chemicals for blight, weed control. I have no control over these costs. I also am unable to control what price is obtained for all this effort. Growers are at the mercy of many factors in the international and domestic markets. We have suffered through retaliatory tariffs and likely will again. Because of the overtime bill from a previous session, I have to limit time for my primary and most important employee and take on hourly people on weekends. HB2548 appears to put even more economic pressure on farming in Oregon. I have a lot invested in my farm and work very hard at it. This bill makes the practice of farming more discouraging. It, along with the overtime bill, will drive automation where it is possible. Automation carries a large up front expense and reduces employment.

The average age of farmers in Oregon is almost 59 years. Why would a young person want to go into farming when there is no profit to be made? This bill would make things even more challenging. I urge you to oppose the bill.  
Thank you.