

My name is Dan Dusschee and I am writing in response to House Bill 2548. My wife, Helen, and I established Freedom Hill Vineyard located in Polk County in 1981 with an initial planting of 13 acres. In the early 2000's we lost every grape vine to a soil borne pathogen called phylloxera which was 55 acres at the time. We overcame those challenging years and currently harvest 92 acres. Our goal is to establish a family legacy vineyard and our son is now the vineyard manager.

I am opposed to House Bill 2548 for a variety of reasons. It would appear to duplicate areas already regulated by state agencies such as BOLI and Oregon OSHA including minimum wage, work scheduling, overtime, and safety training which would be administered by an appointed board. I am guessing supporters of this bill do not believe the state is nearly involved enough in our farm business, but I suggest the opposite. We spend considerable time making sure all required trainings are conducted along with appropriate documentation. We pay annual fees to be advised by the Oregon Farm Bureau of any changes in guidelines. All employees are paid more than minimum wage and when we harvest, piece rate earns the best pickers over \$300 for four hours or less. Establishing an arbitrary minimum wage could easily make having enough employees not feasible resulting in more mechanization, fewer employees, and possibly forcing us out of business. We don't need requirements set by outside forces in order to keep Freedom Hill Vineyard in business and employees working.

Discipline and termination are followed in accordance with our written policies and all employees are required to familiarize themselves with these guidelines. We have never "fired" anyone and have never had to enter into a written work plan. We find that with proper training, supervision, and communication the farm runs smoothly. Eliminating the at-will employment feature in agriculture would help no one, but would create division on the farm.

We appreciate our employees and understand how essential they are for our continued success and always try to do the right thing by them. However, we are the ones with the most risk exposure. If our crop is destroyed by rain, birds, smoke or other forms of disaster our employees will have to find another place to work while we may very possibly have to sell the farm. Please do not pass House Bill 2548 which I believe will further hamper families having successful farms and the people they employ.