



## NAUMES, INC.

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March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Dacia Grayber  
Chair, House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards  
900 Court St. NE,  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Grayber and members of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards:

Our family business, Naumes, Inc., is primarily a grower, packer and shipper of pears, farming around 1100 acres of orchards, and we also operate around 86 acres of wine grapes, Naumes Family Vineyards, and a custom crush winery, Naumes Crush & Fermentation. My family has been farming in Southern Oregon for three generations.

I am writing you today in regards to the proposed House Bill 2548. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the significant challenges and dangers this bill represents to farming and agribusiness in Oregon. We urge you to oppose House Bill 2548. As you know, this bill would impose an Agricultural Workforce Labor Standards Board that could independently raise wages, impose new employment terms, and allow workers to strike. This completely disregards the significant protections already in place for farmworkers and threatens to fast-track new, burdensome bureaucracy that could cripple Oregon's agricultural industry.

What our industry needs now is stability and not disruption. Oregon's growers are already grappling with the implementation of the state's recent agricultural overtime law, which has already led to worker dissatisfaction and reduced work hours for many as the cap moves down to 40 by 2027. Now, HB 2548 proposes a sweeping, one-size-fits-all workforce mandate that could force many family farms and ranches out of business.

Farm workers are already protected by very strong workplace regulations such as paid sick time, minimum wage, harassment and discrimination protections, break and meal times and other labor protections under the Bureau of Labor & Industries (BOLI). Any labor complaints can be reported to and investigated by BOLI. Oregon OSHA has one of the highest worksite inspection rates and has adopted some of the most expansive workplace protections in the country. These rules cover a myriad of subjects including Heat Illness Prevention, the Worker Protection Standard for pesticide use and Ag Labor Housing. The Ag Labor Housing rules were just updated in January of 2025 and these changes represent yet another cost and disruption to farmers as we seek to keep up with the new requirements. Given the large number of farm worker protections that already exist, what real issue is this bill trying to solve? It seems that the state would be better off making sure that the multitude of existing protections are properly implemented and enforced rather than setting up a new, expensive and unnecessary level of bureaucracy.

We are also strongly opposed to the proposal in HB 2548 that eliminates at-will employment for farms and ranches. At-will employment is the law in nearly every state. But HB 2548 carves out farms and puts employers at risk for costly claims for making necessary staffing decisions. All other sectors in Oregon would be at-will, except farms, whose employment needs are impacted by weather, yields, trade and market conditions, pests, and diseases. Not only is that unfair, but it will likely result in job loss as employers plan workforce needs to address that risk.

Ultimately this bill will not help workers or consumers and it will continue the trend of making farming harder and more expensive in the State of Oregon. I urge you to listen to our agricultural producers and oppose this bill.

Thank you,

Michael D. Naumes  
President & CEO  
Naumes, Inc.

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