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STATE SENATOR  
DISTRICT 16



## OREGON STATE SENATE

### Vote Explanation for HB 4002

March 4th, 2022

I am filing this vote explanation to explain my vote on HB 4002.

When we talk about farmworker overtime, we are talking about fairness. And there's a lot about this that just isn't fair. It hasn't been fair for a very long time. It is unfair that our state should be independently correcting an injustice ourselves that should be corrected with the full weight and power of the federal government. It is unfair that Oregon farmers might suffer consequences because of this choice we made as a nation—that overtime pay should be an American standard *except* for farmworkers. And it is deeply unfair that the men and women harvesting the food that my family will eat are working fifty to sixty hours per week or more doing one of the hardest forms of work imaginable without overtime pay.

We couldn't allow this injustice to continue, and we couldn't force our small farmers to take this burden on without our help. We used the weight of our power as legislators to devote resources to this cause as we should have, and should continue to do for as long as it takes.

I'd like to address the permanence of the tax credits. The percentages do decrease a bit over time, but they remain fairly high; 60% for small farmers under 25 FTE and 100% for dairies under 25 FTE. The language in the bill, as well as intentions clearly stated on the floor, demonstrates the idea that these tax credits will be ongoing. My expectation for future legislatures is that these tax credits remain permanent until there is a federal solution.

I'd also like to note that agriculture broadly is not a monolith; dairy and livestock operate differently than crop production. Because each of these industries are vital to the well-being of our society, their differences should be considered in future legislation.

We need to take care of both our farmers and our farmworkers. This bill, though imperfect, was the best solution available to us. I expect that the legislature will continue to monitor this issue and ensure that we are doing everything in our power to keep both our farmers and farmworkers whole.

Sincerely,

Senator Rachel Armitage  
Oregon Senate District 16