



March 2nd, 2022

Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building, H271
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation on House Bill 4002 B

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I voted yes on House Bill 4002 B because I believe that farmworkers deserve to be paid a fair and living wage for their hard work. As my district has both farmworkers and growers, I was an active participant in the negotiations to reach a compromise that both the agricultural industry and workers could agree upon. This bill went through many iterations but I believe that HB 4002 B is a sound compromise that provides workers with the dignity and fairness they deserve, but seeks to provide growers with a slower implementation process and with tax credits that will help offset the costs of paying overtime.

The current range-worker exemption provides those who work with livestock the flexibility they need to care for animals around the clock and avoids the complexity of tracking their hours. This was a necessary addition to the bill and its inclusion is one of the reasons I voted yes. It is beneficial to all of those required to care for cattle, sheep, or other livestock that are raised and fed on land zoned for exclusive farm and range use, or our public and private forests and ranges. Those who work with livestock in our fields, pastures, and hills should and will be excluded from paying or calculating overtime so long as they pay the salary required under existing law.

After implementation, we will need to carefully follow several of the tax provisions to ensure that the tax credits provide adequate and timely assistance to the farm and ranch families who need it most. We must consider if the tax credit covers the actual need, whether the Revenue Department is getting checks and reimbursements out in a timely manner, and we need to ensure that future Legislators are allocating sufficient tax dollars to meet demand. To this end, the bill requires a report back to the Legislature on identified economic impacts so that we may monitor any potential effects this policy has on the agricultural industry and make adjustments where needed.

I will personally be following the implementation process closely, as we need to make sure that the bill has the intended results of benefiting workers and family farms, and ensuring that the Agricultural industry in Oregon remains strong. I will be paying particular attention to the tools and mechanisms of the tax credits and exemptions. If the tax credits prove inadequate in providing assistance, I commit to championing any needed changes in future legislative sessions.

Sincerely,

Representative Susan McLain

