

Hi im ross Belanger, im am writing in opposition to LD357,LD588, LD589

I am part owner at R. Belanger & sons farms in Lewiston. I'm a third-generation farmer and is in the process of taking over operations at the farm.

We raise about 250 acres of vegetables

We employ about 25 people in the growing season and keep 10 full time year round.

Our farm just like many others is a lot of manual labor and long hours.

Concerning LD589 We need to keep farms separate from state wage and hour laws.

This is how it could effect us.60 hours a week is an average work week for many of my employees during the growing season. At 60 hours a week 20 of that being overtime pay over the growing season would come out to be \$120,000 extra. On a good year this is often well over 1/2 of our profit. We wont be able to survive long with having to pay over time.

Concerning LD357 this is not as much of a concern due to the fact that we already pay our employees more then minimum wage.

What I will have to do is limit the food we do produce and feed Mainers with. I will cut my employees hours to 40 hours a week. By making these changes my h2a works already told me that they will not come back to work for me if they can't work over 40 hours a week.

I say all this not to try to diminish the work that my employees do. I say this as a business person the numbers don't add up in the farming world.

Please listen to the farmers that are here in person and that sent in written testimony.

Bills like this will put Maine farmers out of business and force Maine families to buy product from other states that don't have overtime

Sincerely,

Ross belanger