



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1440
TTY: (207) 287-4469

Timothy C. Guerrette

P.O. Box 224

Caribou, ME 04736

Phone: (207) 227-3577

Timothy.Guerrette@legislature.maine.gov

Testimony of Rep. Timothy Guerrette on

LD 589, "An Act to Make Agricultural Workers and Other Related Workers Employees Under the Wage and Hour Laws"

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor

April 2, 2025

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, I am Representative Tim Guerrette and I represent the towns of Caribou, Wade and Washburn.

I am here to express my strong opposition to LD 589, which would classify agricultural workers as employees under wage and hour laws.

There's no denying that the cost of living has increased, and this has snowballed the cost of efficiently operating a business. When costs increase, so do the wages paid to employees. Farmers are not in this business to get rich—we do it to honor the traditions of generational work ethic, with the product of that being quite literally the "fruits of our labor."

Due to ongoing labor shortages, many farms rely on migrant workers to efficiently plant and harvest crops and operate packing facilities for distribution. The federal government already mandates their wages, which are significantly higher than Maine's minimum wage. Adding overtime wages on top of this would all but send multiple farmers into bankruptcy.

This bill would impose rigid labor regulations that do not align with the seasonal and unpredictable nature of farm work. Many farms operate on tight margins and cannot absorb the additional costs, which could lead to reduced hiring, shorter work seasons, and even farm closures. Additionally, many agricultural workers value the flexibility and opportunity that current arrangements provide. If passed, this bill would threaten the future of family farms, harm the very workers it seeks to protect, and weaken Maine's agricultural industry as a whole.

Please oppose LD 589 to preserve the viability of Maine's farms and their workforce.

Thank you—I'm happy to answer any questions.

Timothy C. Guerrette
State Representative

District 4 Caribou, Wade & Washburn