

Omar Rodriguez Rodriguez
PO Box 444
Pierce, CO, 80650

March 17th, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Omar Rodriguez, and I've spent the majority of my life working in agricultural sectors here in Colorado. I currently work on a diversified farm operation in Weld County. I am writing today in opposition to Senate Bill 26-081 and in support of Senate Bill 26-121.

Since the full implementation of Colorado's overtime rules, I have personally experienced adjustments from my employer in my allotted work hours, thus resulting in less take-home pay than I have normally made during certain times of the year. I also know other agricultural workers who have experienced the same limitation in hours worked since the overtime requirement has gone into effect.

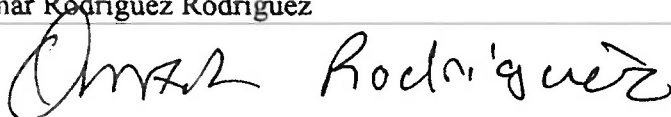
Although done with positive intentions, the overtime requirements are impacting all of our families negatively. Our elected officials must understand that the agricultural industry is not like any other industry. Those of us who have worked and continue to work in the industry do it because we love the work we do and the overall gratification that we get from producing food and fiber that then benefits our communities.

Of the personal impacts my own family and community has experienced, the loss of take-home pay has forced many to turn to working two or even three jobs to make a living and support their families.

Again, I ask you to oppose Senate Bill 26-081 and to support Senate bill 26-121.

Kind Regards,

Omar Rodriguez Rodriguez

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Omar Rodriguez Rodriguez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

February 2, 2025

Brad Erker
Executive Director
Colorado Association of Wheat Growers

Dear Brad,

This letter is to confirm my frustration with the State of Colorado's farm worker overtime regulations. We have a Farm and livestock operation in Northeast Colorado and Southwest Nebraska. We have three H2A employees from South Africa, four additional employees (3 Mexican Green Cards and one additional) as well as my son, grandson, and myself. We cannot find qualified employees for our work needs. We have tried local and regional newspapers with no success.

We treat our employees as if they are family members and we have had past employees work for us for over 50 years. For H2A employees, their wage is set at \$17.84 per hour. In addition, we are required to provide housing, transportation to work, and airfare back and forth to their country of origin. For our other employees, we pay fair wages, health insurance, retirement benefits, etc. We recently had a long-term employee who retired and was making over \$100,000 per year.

Most of our employees and especially the H2A employees want to work as many hours as they possibly can. They are here for 9 months and thus want to work long hours. The State says over 48 hours per week that we have to pay time and a half. As you know, farming is a seasonal job and no farm can survive working just 48 hours a week. The farm economy does not allow us to pay these rates and thus we have to limit their hours. Consequently, farm employees go to another state that does not have such restrictive overtime regulations. Our labor costs are a huge part of our yearly expenses. The Colorado Legislature has made it very difficult for us to compete with farmers in neighboring states with less restrictive regulations.

It disturbing to us that the State of Colorado feels they have to mandate to us how we pay our employees. If we are mistreating or taking advantage of our employees, there is nothing keeping them from seeking employment elsewhere.

Whatever the Colorado Association of Wheat Growers can do to remedy this government over-reach is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jim Carlson
Carlson Grain Company



48921 E 128th Ave, Unit A
Bennett, CO 80102-9418
Office: 303-644-3443

3/18/2026

Dear Members of the Business Labor & Technology Committee,

Hey! It's me, your friendly intown neighbor, right across from you in the apartment building. I wake up early and battle traffic just like you — the only difference is that my drive takes me eastbound to the rural part of Bennett. I'm a 5th-generation family farmer from the eastern plains of Colorado.

Farmers don't all look the same, live the same lifestyles, or drive the same vehicles. But there *is* one thing we all share: we're passionate about what we do. And I'm not out there alone. I'm one of eight kids of the 5th-generation family members still working on our farm, working to keep the legacy alive.

I am **in favor of Senate Bill 26-121**. Extending overtime to 60 hours per week while keeping all current exemptions in place isn't just something we want — it's something agriculture needs to survive. One of those current exemptions is the ability for family farms to *not* have to pay family member's overtime. At Kalcevic Farms, we don't use that exemption, but many of my friends — whose family farms no longer exist — relied on it simply to keep their operations afloat.

I am **against Senate Bill 26-081** because it removes all the exemptions that have helped agriculture stay viable. There are so many things we can't control in this industry: the weather, the markets, the cost of fuel, nutrients, and seed. The things we rely on to make a profit or even finish a day's work are already stacked against us. We need more time — not less — to grow the food that ends up on your table.

In conclusion, I oppose Senate Bill 26-81 and support Senate Bill 26-121

Thank you,

Asia Kalcevic

Asia Kalcevic
5th Generation Farmer
