

**OREGON  
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# OFB 2022 Short Session Preview

The 2022 Oregon Legislative Session, which starts on Feb. 1, will be one of the most unique short sessions in recent memory. With COVID-19 causing bill hearings to be virtual, and the 2022 elections just over the horizon, there are a lot of dynamics at play for legislators and advocates.

As always, key agricultural issues top the legislative interest list, with Democratic leaders indicating that ag overtime and the "Private Forest Accords" are top priorities.

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is working hard to educate legislators on the impacts that an ag overtime law will have on Oregon's labor-dependent farms and ranches; OFB is helping to arrange legislative tours, participating in a legislative workgroup, and leading a coalition of agricultural groups opposed to the proposal.

The coalition released an economic report that assesses the potential impact of the proposed



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legislation requiring Oregon farms to pay overtime after 40 hours of work, despite a national exemption for agriculture. The study shows that the likely outcomes will be limited hours for farmworkers, rather than increased take-home pay. Other impacts of mandated ag overtime pay on farms would likely be increased mechanization, changes to less labor-intensive crops, and smaller farms being forced to sell out to larger operations, among other detrimental results.

Oregon's farms and ranches are already at a breaking point following the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 and 2021 natural disasters, and increased input costs. As price takers, Farm Bureau members cannot afford higher labor costs and still remain viable.

OFB is also gearing up to intervene in a recent lawsuit filed by labor advocates trying to force the courts to adopt an ag overtime mandate outside of the legislative process.

Learn more about ag overtime at [OregonFB.org](https://OregonFB.org) and help tell the story of how it would hurt Oregon's farm and ranch families by sharing related posts from OFB's Facebook page @ofbinfo and Twitter @orefarmbureau.

Beyond ag overtime, OFB is closely tracking the "Private Forest Accords," the name given to the deal that many environmental groups just struck with several timber companies around harvest buffers and a potential habitat conservation plan. This work builds off 2020 legislation that created new pesticide notification requirements for forestry work.

We have heard significant concerns about the negotiated agreement from Farm Bureau members and will be closely reviewing the draft legislation once it's released.

OFB also is participating in conversations around water rights enforcement happening due to the proliferation of illegal marijuana grows around

the state, tracking wildfire and predator proposals, and several other bills of interest.

On the proactive side, OFB is bringing back our predator control district legislation, working to restore the ability of landowners to help fund their counties' wildlife services contracts. We are also advocating for increased funding for natural disaster assistance for farmers and ranchers, and improved funding for wolf compensation.

With the 2022 elections just around the corner, recent legislative departures, and several legislators announcing plans to run for higher office, elections dynamics will have significant influence on priorities and outcomes in the 2022 session.

OFB needs your support to keep Oregon agriculture strong, vital, and viable! Join Farm Bureau today at [OregonFB.org/join](https://OregonFB.org/join) and sign up for OFB Action Alerts at [OregonFB.org/advocacy](https://OregonFB.org/advocacy).

## Vilsack addresses AFBF Convention attendees

Twenty Farm Bureau members from Oregon attended the 103<sup>rd</sup> American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Convention in Atlanta, Jan. 7-12. The group had the opportunity to hear from many distinguished speakers, including U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

In his keynote address to attendees on Jan. 10, Vilsack talked about the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) work on the Wildfire & Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) program, which provides payments to producers to offset losses from qualifying natural disasters. WHIP+ covers losses of crops, trees, bushes, and vines that occurred as a result of disaster events, which occurred throughout much of Oregon in 2020 and 2021.

"It was important for the administration to work with Congress in getting the WHIP+ program passed and implemented with an additional \$10 billion," Vilsack said. "We're working now at USDA to simplify the process for application."

Vilsack also told farmers and ranchers that the USDA is committed to helping them find additional income streams by using climate-smart practices.

"Listening to Farm Bureau and listening to those in agriculture, we know that it's important to establish a partnership in this effort to create climate-smart commodities," Vilsack said. "This is not top-down, this is a bottom-up effort. We know it needs to be voluntary, incentive-based, and available to producers of all sizes, methods, locations, and commodities."

He also shared his thoughts on broadband deployment, trade negotiations, and investments in livestock processing capabilities.

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) President Angi Bailey, along with other state Farm Bureau presidents, had the chance to meet with Vilsack after his speech and discuss issues facing the agricultural industry, including immigration, labor, and regional flexibility in Farm Service Agency programs.



From left are OFB 1st VP Brian Glaser, Women's Advisory Council Chair and 4th VP Kristie Glaser, Crystal Otley of Harney County Farm Bureau, 2nd VP Shane Otley, 3rd VP John Zielinski, outgoing AFBF YF&R Committee Chair Jon Iverson, and President Angi Bailey at the 103<sup>rd</sup> American Farm Bureau Convention in Atlanta earlier this month.

"It was a great honor to be able to speak directly with U.S. Ag Secretary Vilsack and bring our issues forward. That's the type of unique opportunity that being involved with Farm Bureau brings," said Bailey.

During a recorded message to convention attendees, President Joe Biden expressed his appreciation for U.S. farmers and ranchers, while highlighting the administration's priorities related to the Packers and

Stockyards Act, infrastructure improvements, and promoting fair competition in agricultural markets.

On Jan. 11, Bailey, OFB 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Brian Glaser, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Shane Otley, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President John Zielinski represented Oregon on the floor of the AFBF House of Delegates, which discusses and votes upon Farm Bureau policy. This policy guides the organization's advocacy efforts at the national level. Other delegates

from Oregon were Jon Iverson, outgoing AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee chair, and Mickey Killingsworth, Western Region AFBF Women's Leadership representative.

Long-standing frustration over imbalances in the meat industry led to delegates' calls for greater transparency in livestock markets.

As farmers' labor struggles continue, delegates also approved additional policies that build on existing AFBF policies regarding the need for employee stabilization and reforms to the guest-worker program.

Recognizing the growth of urban agriculture and importance of ensuring the success of all forms of agriculture, delegates voted to create new policy to support its continuation and acknowledge its economic contributions.

See photos from the AFBF convention on OFB's Facebook @ofbinfo and Instagram @oregonfarmbureau.

## OFB officers elected

Angi Bailey, owner of a nursery specializing in Japanese maples and member of Multnomah County Farm Bureau, was elected to serve a two-year term as Oregon Farm Bureau's (OFB) President.

Bailey was elected to the position by the OFB House of Delegates, a grassroots group comprised of family farmers and ranchers representing

County Farm Bureaus from across the state. The election took place on Dec. 9, 2021, during the 89th OFB Convention in Redmond.

Said Bailey: "It's an honor to be elected, by individuals for whom I have a great deal of respect, as president of a remarkable organization like Oregon Farm Bureau. OFB is doing vital work for our members, and I feel



Newly elected OFB President Angi Bailey

grateful and blessed to be a part of that work."

Also elected were OFB 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Shane Otley, member of Harney County Farm Bureau; 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President John Zielinski, member of Marion County Farm Bureau; 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President and Women's Advisory Council Chair Kristie Glaser of Linn County Farm Bureau; and Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Chair Kara Glass of Jackson County Farm Bureau.