



The California State Beekeepers Association Urges You to Support AB 3056



HERE'S WHY:

#1. Ag workers are earning less, not more, under existing overtime laws.

- AB 1066, a law passed in 2016 to help increase farmworker pay, is having the opposite effect. Workers are earning less.
- A University of California study agrees and has found that worker hours and earnings have decreased as an effect of the legislation.
- A coalition of California beekeepers and their workers is asking the state legislature to support AB 3056, introduced by James Gallagher (AD3). This bill seeks to make a small change to current ag overtime law and would allow ag workers to earn more money.
- Specifically, AB 3056 would require ag businesses to pay overtime when workers exceed 9 hours per day or 50 hours per week. This is a slight increase over existing law which requires businesses to pay overtime when workers exceed 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week, but is less than the previous 10-hour days and 60-hour weeks allowed before AB 1066 was enacted.

#2. Beekeepers are struggling to pay their workers more, but everyone is earning less.

- Beekeepers are reporting the take-home pay of their workers is going down - even though their hourly pay rate is rising.
- Currently beekeepers are paying their employees well above California minimum wage, with most beekeeping operations paying up to \$20 or more per hour.
- Unfortunately, as operating costs increase and revenues fall or remain stagnant, beekeepers are working hard to control their labor costs in an effort to remain profitable.
- One of the few remaining costs that beekeepers can control is overtime pay. Instead of allowing their existing workers to work longer, beekeepers are now forced to hire more workers to cover the long shifts necessary to care for bees. This comes at the expense of their existing employees who are no longer earning the same volume of overtime pay.
- The result is that workers like Alejandro from Strachan Apiaries in Yuba City are being offered fewer hours of work each week. Despite the fact that Alejandro's hourly rate has gone up each year for the past three years, his earnings for the season are not increasing. In addition, because the unemployment Alejandro receives during the off-season is based on his total monthly earnings, those benefits have also decreased.
- Customarily, beekeepers have paid workers a bonus at the end of the year in return for their hard work. However, rising costs have made it difficult for beekeepers to continue this practice. "Last year I paid the bonuses anyway," says Philip Russell, owner of Strachan Apiaries. "The result was negative profits. I won't be able to keep paying bonuses if I want to stay in business. Small family businesses like mine need some relief."

#3. Your vote will help save the bees.

- Beekeeping is a unique and specialized industry.
- Most commercial beekeeping operations in California are family-owned, multi-generational businesses. They love what they do to help feed the world.
- Bees are necessary to produce about one-third of the foods we eat. Commercial beekeeping businesses provide pollination services to farmers in California and throughout the nation.
- Many commercial beekeepers also produce honey as a means of bringing in additional income to support their businesses. In recent years, honey prices have declined significantly due to an influx of cheaper imported honey thus reducing returns for U.S. honey producers.
- Did you know that some beekeepers focus on the task of raising and selling queen bees? Every hive needs a queen bee and California beekeepers are responsible for supplying the vast majority of the queen bees needed for over 2 million hives located throughout the U.S.
- Each of these unique services provided by California beekeepers is necessary to produce our nation's food. Without commercial beekeepers, growing food would be impossible.
- Beekeepers provide critical services to farmers and other beekeepers. But these businesses are also facing rising costs for everything from fuel to water. As a result, prices beekeepers receive for their services are in decline. This has significant impact, since almond farmers alone make up about one-third of a beekeeper's income.
- The protection and preservation of bees is an important, bipartisan issue. As a legislator, one of the most important things you can do to save the bees is support California's beekeeping industry. They need your help to control costs AND pay workers more. A vote for AB 3065 will help address these concerns. We respectfully urge you to vote "Aye" on this bill.

About the California State Beekeepers Association.

The California State Beekeepers Association is an organization that exists to support professional beekeepers and California's pollination needs. CSBA values all kinds of bees – whether they're commercial, non-commercial or native. But our primary concern is protecting managed bees who are doing the real work of feeding the world.

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