

Good morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you this morning. My name is Ron Bjork and I am a farmer and rancher from Eagle Point, Oregon. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this morning about our nation's ongoing shipping crisis, and how it's impacting Oregon farms and ranches.

The current challenges we are facing are the greatest we've ever seen in our sector. While there is no easy solution, our state and our nation could be doing much more than they are to resolve the issue. After increased purchasing emptied US inventories as the nation opened back up after the pandemic, we've seen record demand and compounding shipping issues result in empty shelves.

In my community, I cannot get parts I need to maintain and repair my equipment. This means that we have to piece things together, borrow from neighbors, and potentially lose our crops. We are also compounding these issues by preemptively purchasing necessary parts and tires because we can't afford a breakdown in a critical period without access to needed parts. In addition, we have seen record fuel and fertilizer increases in Oregon, largely because of labor and regulatory cost increases that are being passed onto the consumer.

In addition, we are hearing that because of record demand in the US, container ships no longer need US exports to make shipping worthwhile, so US farmers are having trouble accessing foreign markets, further impacting our bottom line.

With cargo ships and trains backed up at terminals, we are seeing first-hand the impact of limited terminal hours. Despite President Biden allegedly extending terminal hours, bending to the needs of labor activists is not resulting in meaningful changes to the backlog. These

issues also compound cost increases, with containers getting “stuck” at the terminal, and the importer being charged for that extra terminal time. Our trucking companies tell us that there’s a shortage of truck drivers, and an aging population with few new people joining the workforce. While more truckers would be helpful, Oregon has compounding regulatory burdens on those companies, including increasing fuel costs and electric and clean truck mandates. Further, warehouses are being shut down with COVID outbreaks and other new protocols impacting facilities.

As an Oregon farmer, my job has never been harder. The supply chain issues and compounding regulatory burdens are greatly impacting my operation and my community. We have to find real, meaningful solutions to our supply chain issues for Oregon businesses to remain viable. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today and I am happy to take any questions.

Ron Bjork

Eagle Point, Oregon