

# LINGANORE

W I N E C E L L A R S

Senator Beidle,

Finance Committee,

SB804

One thing people often don't realize about viticulture is just how labor-intensive it is, and how much success depends on timing.

Grapevines don't run on a schedule that's convenient for us. When shoots start growing, we have a narrow window to position them. When the canopy gets thick, we have to open it up so sunlight and airflow can reach the fruit. When disease pressure hits, sprays have to go on immediately. And when grapes reach the right balance of sugar, acidity, and flavor, harvest has to happen right then, sometimes within just a few days.

People do all of that work. Vineyard crews spend long days outdoors in the heat doing physically demanding work that often can't be delayed and can't be mechanized.

We absolutely believe in protecting the safety and health of those workers. They are the backbone of every vineyard operation. But many of the new heat-stress standards are creating a different kind of challenge — not because farmers oppose safety, but because of the amount of documentation and administrative work they require.

Instead of focusing every available hour on the vineyard during critical periods, managers and supervisors are spending more and more time logging temperatures, documenting breaks, tracking worker time, and filling out compliance records.

Agriculture, and especially viticulture, operates in narrow windows of opportunity. When we lose time to paperwork during those windows, the vines don't wait. The work still needs to be done, but now we're doing it with less time and greater pressure.

Farmers want to do the right thing. We want our workers to be safe, we want strong farms, and we want to continue producing high-quality crops.

That's why farmers across the country are supporting a practical solution — an agricultural exemption to the heat-stress standards that recognizes the unique realities of farming while still protecting the people who work in our fields.

Because in agriculture, and especially in viticulture, timing is everything, and the ability to do the right work at the right moment determines the entire vintage.

Thank you,

Eric Aellen

V.P. Linganore Winecellars