

West, Danielle@Labor

From: Joe Wells <jw@shakermaker.com>
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2026 4:53 PM
To: West, Danielle@Labor
Subject: PAGA reform

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My company Orchard Machinery Corporation manufactures nut harvesting equipment in Yuba City, selling nationally and internationally. We employ about 325 workers, all but 10 who are located in our Georgia facility. We were served our first PAGA suit about 5 years ago from a worker who had worked with us for 3 weeks before quitting. We had to hire PAGA attorney's to represent us. We had done a very good job with documentation, wage and hour laws, pretty clean according to our attorney's, and yet it cost us about \$400,000 in attorney fees and the settlement. We were served again earlier this year from an injured worker who settled his workers comp settlement case and the next day a Los Angeles PAGA attorney served us. His workers comp attorney sold/referred his name to a PAGA attorney.. We again were clean, and yet it will cost us about \$300,000. And the time internally generating all of the paperwork.

I do not see how such a penal process is only allowed in one state. No other state has to walk through the land mines of a PAGA suit. It is nearly impossible in a wage and hour environment to not have minor infractions, which opens up the company for a 4 year look back of all wages. There needs to be some sort of reform to protect businesses from PAGA. There is no way the punishment matches the crime. Please stop this.

Joe Wells
CFO/Owner of Orchard Machinery Corporation