

Submitter: Hope Segel-Vaccher
On Behalf Of: LWLC
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens and members of the Committee-

LWLC is strongly opposed to this untimely and unnecessary bill from the anti-government organization Oregon Property Owners Association. This short session should be focused on the budget, the criminal justice system, and transportation. Land use bills are a distraction from the work needed for all Oregonians.

Additionally problematic is the fact that the bill was written for the benefit of one farm stand owner in Hood River County. But as with other such one-offs, this bad idea would have a negative impact on many heritage family farms, farmers who rarely ask you all for anything, much less year after year after year. . . asks.

A partial list of problems with HB 4153 includes the following:

****Complex, confusing, controversial land use bills like HB 4153 don't belong in the short session**

****Farm stand and Agritourism uses are already allowed for direct farm product sales and customer engagement.**

****The so-called "Farm Stores" could use 95% or more of their so-called" store space" for retail items and prepared food and beverages that have no connection to the farm, or any farm for that matter**

****Continued commercialization of the EFU zone increases farmland prices beyond what new farmers and leasers of farmland can afford. "Farm Stores" belong in town, near local restaurants, retail outlets, and public parking**

****The bill removes the ability of counties to require an assessment of impacts to the rural community. OPOA would prefer counties have no say whatsoever in decisions about development on farmland.**

****Non farmers can buy or lease farm land to use for these stores while utilizing only a small part of the land for farm use.**

****Proposed Farm Stores will cover some of our best farm lands with buildings, parking lots, playgrounds, driveways and septic fields that will never be removed**

Please consider:

HB 4153 weakens, and is intended to weaken protections that restrict non-farm commercial activities as primary allowed uses on farmland, regardless of productivity.

Oregon already allows farm stands, agritourism, and value-added processing under current law. Those tools support farmers without turning farmland into non-farm commercial operations.

HB 4153 is yet another unprovoked attack by a special interest group on our valuable EFU lands zoned for farming and related farm uses. Please vote no. Please do not advance this unnecessary and untimely bill out of Committee.

Sincerely,

Hope Vaccher
Lane and Lincoln County