

Submitter: Lori Pyles
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

To: Members of the Oregon House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of HB 4153 — Allowing Farm Stores on Farmland

Dear Co-Chairs, Members of the Committee, and Esteemed Legislators:

My name is Lori Pyles, and I am writing today as a concerned Oregonian and a supporter of sustainable agriculture, family farms, and rural economic vitality. I am strongly in support of House Bill 4153, which would allow counties to approve farm stores on lands zoned for agricultural use as a nonfarm use (rather than just the smaller farm stand model currently permitted).

Oregon's farmers face unprecedented economic pressures from rising costs, labor shortages, and market volatility. In this environment, direct-to-consumer sales — including farm stores that can offer a broader range of products year-round — provide critical income streams that help farms survive and thrive. Farm stores allow producers to retain more of the economic value of their work by selling value-added products, local specialty goods, and diverse offerings that consumers increasingly seek. This expands opportunities beyond traditional wholesale markets, where small and mid-sized farms often struggle to cover costs.

By granting counties the authority to approve farm stores, HB 4153 respects local land-use planning while giving rural communities practical tools to support agricultural viability. Counties are best positioned to understand their unique landscapes and can apply appropriate conditions that ensure farm stores remain accessory to agricultural operations without undermining farmland preservation goals.

Oregon's agricultural legacy is one of resilient family farms, farmers markets, community gathering places, and rural enterprises that educate the public about where food comes from. If small farms cannot diversify their revenue sources — including through farm stores — we risk losing not only productive farmland, but also the experiences and community connections that define our rural way of life.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support HB 4153 and recognize the critical role it plays in strengthening farm economies, enhancing local food systems, and preserving working landscapes across Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Lori Pyles
Sandy, Oregon