

Submitter: TRACI BARNES

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

I grew up on a small farm on Sauvie Island across the road from two of the largest farm stands on the island. My family and my horses still live there so I go to the island every day. I love the summer and fall months because we have access to the various things the farm stands offer, like fresh and cooked food, and activities on the farms like the corn mazes. Yes, even the island residents go to the farms and often work there too. I have even taken my mini therapy horses to visit the farms so that people can pet them and learn about horses as therapy animals. I had the privilege of growing up there and showing livestock in 4-H at the Multnomah County Fair. The fair was always a place where city folks could come and learn about farming and agriculture, which is a huge part of the rest of our state. Since many of the fairs have become a thing of the past, where else do children that live in town learn about where their food comes from? Where can they have a hands on experience for this? These farms are a good place to learn about where things like food, wool, leather, cotton, flowers, eggs (to name a few) come from. It also gets people outside in fresh air. This was especially important during the Covid shut down. The human race has been through many stressful events and changes in the last six years. Now more than ever do we need an outlet for this. Why do you think so many people visit these farms every year? It's become a long standing family tradition and it needs to stay that way. These farmers have also been continuing another long standing family tradition by farming family land. They need all the ways that these farms bring in income, in their short open and growing seasons, to provide income for their families and their employees for the entire year. Please keep all of these family traditions in attending the farms and their activities and farming traditions alive for years to come. It is still very much needed for all involved. In this world of AI and choas, we need to find ways of finding peace and mindfulness. Where better to find that than out in the country in the fresh air at a farm.