

Submitter: Jen Nelson

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

My Name is Jen Nelson and I am a farmer and community member in Curry County, specifically Langlois and Port Orford. I am writing to you today to express my opposition to HB 4153. Farm stands are a vital part of connecting the public with our food system and building an understanding of what it takes to go from field to fork. But HB 4153 would restrict who is allowed to have a farm stand, replace current definitions with Farm Stores, and give large land owners privileges at the expense of small farm stands in Oregon. We need to find a better solution.

I care about this because I operate and frequently go to other farm stands that would not meet the acreage requirements in section 2.2 of the bill. Small farms need to have the same opportunities to sell their produce as larger farms. These small farms are a vital part of our local community. They provide access to nutritious, healthy, fresh, and local food. Without these small farmsteads, this level of nutritious food would be inaccessible to most in Curry County. Their only other option would be Rays, which does not carry fresh or organic produce. These small farms not only contribute to the well-being of our community through food, but also through a place to congregate and see your neighbors. While there are not many public gatherings, farmsteads serve as a way for neighbors to check-in with each other and keep relationships strong, keeping our sense of community and support for one another strong. Why should large acreage farmers gain privileges at the expense of smaller acre farmers? They already have the upper hand when it comes to the ag industry and current supply chain systems. We should be making it easier and more accessible for Oregonians to operate and find local, small farms.

We are asking you to not place a higher burden on the smallest farms. This bill takes away opportunities from small land holders and farms in order for larger operations to be able to host more events. This is not a good bargain for Oregon and a better deal must be found.

Thank you,

Jen Nelson

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