

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

Members of the committee, my name is Cherokee, I live in Saint Helens, OR, and I am testifying in support of HB 4153. I am writing today to express my strong support for HB 4153. I am not a farmer, but I am a frequent customer of Oregon's farm stores, and I believe this bill is essential for preserving the rural experiences that my family and I value so deeply.

For my family, visiting a local farm like Topaz Farms is about much more than just picking up a bag of apples or a pumpkin. It is where my children learn that food doesn't just come from a grocery store shelf—it comes from the hard work of our neighbors. These farms provide educational classes, hayrides, and seasonal traditions that connect us to Oregon's agricultural roots.

However, I was frustrated to learn that current outdated laws actually make it harder—and sometimes illegal—for farmers to host these activities. It makes no sense to me that:

- A farm store could be penalized just for letting my kids use a hay bale slide.
- A school Field Trip or pickling class is treated with legal suspicion.
- A farm could be fined just for putting up a tent to keep us dry during a rainstorm or to provide shade in the heat.

I support HB 4153 because it brings common sense back to the farm zone. It ensures that the farms I love can stay in business by selling their products directly to us and providing the fun, educational experiences we enjoy.

This bill is the way to go to have consistent laws across the state and eliminate the current county by county variations.

I also appreciate that this bill includes strict guardrails. As a member of the public, I want to see our farmland protected, and HB 4153 does that by requiring active farming on the property and setting strict size limits on buildings. Farms are required to address parking issues, traffic issues, and noise considerations.

Farms shouldn't have to spend huge sums on lawyers to host a harvest festival or to visit with Santa. Please support HB 4153 so that families like mine can continue to enjoy and support Oregon's working farms for years to come.

Sincerely,
Cherokee Councell, Saint Helens, Oregon