

Submitter: Janet Brown

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Testimony in Support of HB 4153

Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Janet, and I am writing today in support of HB 4153.

This bill makes a simple but important correction to Oregon's land use framework by allowing counties to approve farm stores, not just farm stands, as a nonfarm use on land zoned for farm use. That distinction matters. Our current statutes were written for a different era, when direct-to-consumer sales were limited and farm operations were far more narrowly defined. Today's agricultural economy depends on flexibility, value-added products, and the ability to meet customers where they are.

HB 4153 recognizes that reality.

Farm stores give producers a stable, year-round way to sell what they grow, raise, or make. They help small and mid-sized farms stay financially viable, especially in a state where margins are tight and weather patterns are increasingly unpredictable.

This bill also strengthens local economies by keeping dollars circulating in rural communities rather than pushing consumers toward large retailers miles away.

Importantly, HB 4153 does not undermine farmland protections. Counties still retain oversight, and the bill simply gives them the authority to approve a use that aligns with modern agricultural practices. This is a practical, balanced approach that supports farmers without compromising Oregon's long-standing commitment to preserving farm and forest land.

For these reasons, I urge you to support HB 4153 and give Oregon's farmers the tools they need to remain competitive, resilient, and connected to the communities they serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.