

Submitter: ReGina Tyhuis  
On Behalf Of: Bill 4153  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

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February 4, 2026

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

Re: SUPPORT for HB 4153 – The Farm Store Bill

Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Regina, and I am writing today in strong support of HB 4153. This legislation is a vital lifeline for Oregon's small and mid-sized family farms, which are currently facing an existential threat from outdated and overly restrictive land-use regulations.

For generations, Oregon has prided itself on protecting its farmland. However, the definition of what it means to "farm" must evolve to meet the economic realities of the 21st century. Today, growing a crop is often not enough to keep a family farm solvent. ?? ??

#### The Challenge: Regulatory Stagnation

Farms like Topaz Farm and others across the state have become "experience destinations" for their communities. Yet, they are frequently hamstrung by rules that restrict event counts and place arbitrary income caps on non-farm products. Current regulations often penalize farms if their "incidental" revenue—such as tickets for a corn maze or a farm-to-table dinner—exceeds a small fraction of their total sales.

#### The Ripple Effect: Community & Economic Impact

The benefits of HB 4153 extend far beyond the farm gate. When family farms like the Echo Corn Maze in Umatilla County are allowed to thrive, the entire region wins:

- \* Educational Hubs: ?? These farms serve as outdoor classrooms for our children to learn about agriculture.

- \* Local Job Creation: ?? Agritourism is a primary employer for local youth and seasonal workers.

- \* Supporting the Local Value Chain: ?? This bill allows farmers to sell products from neighboring farms, keeping dollars within our rural communities.

- \* Philanthropy: ?? Many of these farms use their events to fundraise for local non-profits.

#### Conclusion and Call to Action

If we want the next generation of Oregonians to value agriculture, we must allow our farms to be accessible, educational, and economically viable. HB 4153 asks for the removal of barriers that prevent Oregon's hardest-working families from succeeding.

I urge the committee to move HB 4153 forward with a 'Do Pass' recommendation. Protecting the economic viability of our family farms is essential for Oregon's future.

Respectfully,

Regina Tyhuis