

February 4th, 2026

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

FR: Ryan Tuthill, Oregon Business & Industry

RE: Oregon Business & Industry's (OBI) Written Comments in Support of HB 4153

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water. For the record, I am Ryan Tuthill, Policy and Program Manager with Oregon Business & Industry.

Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 75% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB4153, a bill that provides much-needed updates to Oregon's farm store statutes to better reflect the economic realities of Oregon's agricultural sector. We recognize the challenges farmers face navigating an evolving economic landscape, and we appreciate the opportunities this bill provides to diversify revenue streams to sustain farming operations.

Enabling farmers to engage in direct sales and other activities is critical in helping farmers retain a greater share of their production value and provides opportunities to the public to experience rural Oregon and learn about the agriculture and natural resource industries that drive economic growth across the state.

Agritourism is a rapidly growing market in the U.S. and globally as consumers look to experience nature, learn about natural resources and engage with rural communities. 95% of Oregon's farms are family-owned, and direct sales from agritourism in the Willamette Valley alone account for almost \$1 billion annually. While Oregon is experiencing an increase in demand for direct-to-consumer food sales, our direct sales and value-added markets are less developed than other regions of the country. The growth of Oregon's agritourism industry lags that of neighboring Washington and California. As in other sectors, it is imperative that Oregon's regulatory environment adapt to the changing economic needs of the agricultural community in order to enhance the state's economic competitiveness.

Removing income limits and expanding allowable event types while maintaining community input are welcome steps forward in providing opportunities for farmers to maintain and diversify their revenue and keep their lands in production, all while allowing Oregon to continue to engage in an emerging market. We appreciate any effort to enhance the vitality of our agricultural sector and urge your support for HB4153.

Thank you for your time,



Ryan Tuthill

Policy & Program Manager, Oregon Business & Industry