

Submitter: Sydney Paoli

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

My name is Sydney Paoli and I am a natural resource professional and community member. I am writing to you today to express my strong 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. They also play an important role in local food security and access to fresh produce- especially for those living in rural areas or "food deserts."

HB 4153 would restrict who is allowed to have a farm stand, replace current definition with farm stores, and give large land owners privileges at the expense of small farm stands in Oregon. This bill would give larger farms with more money and more resources a blatant advantage over the smaller operations. Why should large acreage farmers gain privileges at the expense of smaller acre farmers? Why should small farms be any less legitimate than a large farm when it comes to defining farm use?

I care about this because I grew up in a small, rural, dairy community. I understand that farming is one of the hardest occupations with the highest rates of suicide. I know that small operations are getting pushed out by larger acreage farms. This bill would give small farmers yet another obstacle to overcome.

I think the biggest problem I have with this bill is the fact that it is prioritizing profit and agrotourism events over the intended purpose of a farm stand- which is to provide community members access to locally grown and affordable produce. Farmstands serve as an opportunity for people to better understand what it takes to put food on the table and to build new relationships with their food and the landscapes that grow them. We need to find a better solution.

We are asking you not to 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 for your time and consideration,
Sydney Paoli

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