

Submitter: Ruth Walter

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

My Name is Ruth Walter and I am a resident of Coquille. I am writing to you today to express my 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. But HB 4153 would restrict who is allowed to have a farm stand, replace current definitions with Farm Stores, and give large land owners privileges at the expense of small farm stands in Oregon. We need to find a better solution.

I care about this because:

I frequently go to a farm stand that would not meet the acreage requirements in section 2.2 of the bill.

Small farms need to have the same opportunities to sell their produce as larger farms.

Enforcing unnecessary restraints on small farmers will have a negative impact on our local economy and could ultimately result in the loss of agricultural land if small farms are forced out of business. This would likely result in habitat loss for wildlife and degraded ecological functions if farmland is converted to other land uses.

Farm stands are a part of Oregon culture; a part of our culture that I am proud of. Placing unnecessary restrictions on small farmers to limit their ability to provide for their families byway of supplemental income from their farm stands will cause this part of our culture to suffer in addition to the financial loss these small farmers, many of whom are already struggling financially, will face.

There is no benefit to this measure, this will only result in negative impacts to our community.

We are asking you to not 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,

Ruth Walter

Coquille Resident