

Submitter: Megan Hallstone

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Megan Hallstone, and I farm on Sauvie Island with my parents. I am writing in support of House Bill 4153.

Our family grows a diverse range of crops—including grass seed, wheat, clover seed, sweet corn, pumpkins, squash, potatoes, brussels sprouts, cabbage, and berries—across more than 1,800 acres. Like many farms in Oregon, the majority of what we produce are commodity crops. While diversification helps, commodity markets are volatile and farmers have little control over the prices we receive. We farm to the world market, and in some seasons, that means producing food at a loss.

Recent reporting has warned that U.S. agriculture could face widespread collapse. Here in Oregon, we have already seen too many family farms disappear under mounting economic pressure. The trend will continue unless farmers are given practical tools to stabilize their operations.

HB 4153 offers one of those tools. By allowing carefully regulated, farm-connected retail opportunities, the bill helps working farms diversify modestly and create additional, reliable income streams—without changing the underlying agricultural use of the land. For farms like ours, this kind of flexibility can make the difference between staying in business and being forced to sell.

Put simply: HB 4153 supports family farms. It helps us keep farming through tough market cycles, protects Oregon's agricultural heritage, and strengthens the resilience of rural communities.

Thank you for your consideration and for supporting policies that keep Oregon farms viable for the next generation.

Sincerely,
Megan Hallstone