

Submitter: Shaili Parekh

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

My name is Shaili and I am a community member and food justice advocate in Portland Oregon. I have been doing local food systems, nutrition education, hunger relief and professional chef work for 10 years and 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.

This law would close existing farm stands who are following the law right now but are too small to meet these requirements. This bill replaces all current language around farmstands implying that folks with an honor system stand at the end of their driveway supplied with garden overflow (zucchinis in August, a couple pints of berries, or a sign saying eggs \$6!) would be outlawed by this approach. We want to find solutions for farmers to diversify their income but this bill is a step backwards. Limiting who is allowed to participate in farm stands/stores because of their size is counter to the spirit of community food systems. Why are we penalizing small farmers for not being able to afford more land, being early on in their farm business journey, or telling folks that they aren't allowed to gather the community at their farm because they are small? Why are we giving more privileges to large land owners and telling small operations that they are not allowed to have a farmstand? Oregon communities love their small, homegrown farmstands and we don't want to sacrifice them for the ability of a few larger land owners to host more events. A solution for Oregon's farm stands should uplift us all.

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,  
Shaili  
Arbor Lodge