

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to oppose HB 4153 and to reconsider how this legislation would affect rural communities, small family farms, and local food access across Oregon.

I live in a rural coastal town where small farmstands and direct farm-to-consumer sales are not a niche convenience — they are part of our basic infrastructure. Farms like Valley Flora are woven into the daily life of our community. They provide fresh, locally grown food, accept SNAP and Farm Direct benefits, supply food banks, and allow families of all income levels to access healthy food close to home.

HB 4153 would restrict farmstands based on acreage and sales thresholds rather than on food safety, environmental responsibility, or community benefit. In practice, this means many small, law-abiding family farms would no longer be allowed to operate farmstands they have relied on for years. These are not corporate operations. They are small producers, often on marginal land, doing everything they can to survive while serving their neighbors.

In rural areas, losing farmstands does not simply mean fewer shopping options. It means longer drives to distant grocery stores,

higher food costs, reduced access for seniors and low-income families, and increased dependence on large distributors whose supply chains are already fragile. When small farms are pushed out, rural communities become more vulnerable, not safer. Small family farms also reduce dependency. They keep food dollars circulating locally, support regional resilience, and give people a degree of independence that is especially vital in remote areas. Policies that unintentionally favor larger landholders and scaled-up operations undermine this resilience and concentrate power away from local communities.

I ask you to consider who this bill truly serves and who it harms. Oregon's agricultural strength has always included small, diversified farms that sell directly to their communities. Please do not pass legislation that removes their ability to operate, grow, and serve the people who rely on them.

I respectfully request that HB 4153 be opposed or substantially revised to protect small family farmstands, preserve local food access, and honor the realities of rural life in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and for considering the voices of those who live and farm in rural communities.

Best Regards,

Heather Howell - Citizen of Port Orford, Oregon