

Submitter: Andhi Reyna

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 Andhi Reyna, and I am a community member of Cottage Grove, and have been a farmer and rancher and a farm educator in Lane County for the past 26 years. 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.

In a speech hosted by the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, Olivier DeSchutter, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, reminds us that "we have produced hunger over the years by depriving the peasants of their ability to produce and to make their products accessible. Our needs will not be met by increasing production". And in the case of HB 4153, our communities' needs will not be met by increasing acreage and revenue requirements for farm stand permits. De Schutter goes on to describe how the marginalized farmer and their consumers become one of the hungry when the classic approach of rewarding increased production and limiting access, becomes our go-to model. Food security along with farm diversification should be top priorities, and small farms have the greatest chance at addressing food insecurity. The more small scale farm stands we can retain and grow, the more hyper localized food systems we create, helping to avoid the unintended consequences of food insecurity, decreased sovereign opportunities, and seasonal hunger. We know that when larger producers are afforded opportunity over their smaller counterparts, they have the luxury to cater to a specific market. Small farms, small farm stands and the right for all land stewards to not only produce from their land, but also to sell directly to their local consumers, directly impacts their neighbors and their communities by increasing the accessibility of nutritious foods to low income families. This can mean that small farms with one, 5 or 10 acres in production can be the most impactful and nearest to those that need it the most. This is why small farms should not be any less legitimate than a large farm when it comes to defining farm use and priorities.

Yes, we need to enhance and maintain the ability to diversify on our farms, and agritourism plays an important role in that. But agritourism is not necessarily accessible to ALL of our community members, and often requires certain privileges'

in order to partake in and enjoy these opportunities. We need to protect our mutually supportive relationships that increase healthy food security for the most vulnerable in our communities and neighborhoods.

Large acreage farmers should not gain privileges' at the expense of small acre farmers. Period.

Larry Brewer, co-founder of the Small Farms Conservancy, Oregon research scientist and farm advocate reiterates what our UN Special Rapporteur says, and reminds us, that "small farms and increased accessibility are the best system to expand our food supply in the most sustainable and healthy way".

We are at a moment in history where fighting for our subsistence rights is crucial, where bridging social gaps is essential, and farmers (no matter their size), and farm advocates can make a difference.

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,  
Andhi Reyna  
Branch Road Farm  
Cottage Grove, OR 97424