

Submitter: Chris Hardy

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 Chris Hardy. I am a 5th generation farmer and operate a small diversified seed company in the Rogue Valley. I am writing to you today to express my opposition to HB 4153.

My grandparents farmed in Iowa on a diversified operation that included corn, alfalfa hay and a 100 head of livestock. Their markets depended primarily on local relationships with neighboring farms across the region in the Mississippi River basin. It was often the people they saw every week in church who later stopped by to purchase from them, direct from the farm, or at some point in the season to get feed for their animals.

If it were not for these local relationships, it would not have been possible for them to continue to operate for the fifty plus years that they and their family did with such high level of quality of their product and the support needed to care for the land in the way that they did.

Our diversified low/no-till operation has varied in size between two and three acres over the 20 years I have farmed in Southern Oregon. We have a farm stand and dry-farm and market our crops for improved nutrition and unbeatable flavor.

We also grow and select seed crops that are highly adapted to Oregon's challenging, and increasingly unpredictable climate. I feel HB 4153 would threaten our operation and favor larger-scale, industrial models of farming.

As you may already know, the Rogue Valley is made up primarily of small diversified farming operations that would not meet the acreage requirements of this proposed bill. Many of these farms operate their own farm stands and continue to be hit with high capital costs for hardware and other inputs, including high land costs. They are the backbone for local food that is currently produced and consumed here in Southern Oregon.

I ask you to oppose HB 4153 to stand behind the small farmers of our valley and across many parts of the state that are vital to an already challenged effort to increase local food production here in Oregon.

Thank you,

Chris Hardy
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