

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 Jeni Billups and I am a new farmer planning to offer products and educational events to my local community. 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.

I care about this because:

- I want to operate a farm stand, to share produce, flowers and educational classes with my community but I do not meet the acreage requirements in section 2.2 of the bill.
- Smaller farms, like ours, form a backbone of “shop local” and support public knowledge of where food is sourced and how land should be stewarded for future generations.
- Farm stands encourage the public to stay in touch with their neighbors and many small farms offer a friendly, easy way to connect. We don’t want this to end.
- This bill favors larger acreage farms with more acres in production. Large acreage farmers often sell to bigger markets and bypass the very locals in their neighborhoods so this bill, as written, will be creating more of a gap in rural areas.
- We are just getting started and need more opportunities for revenue generation to offset the cost to restore and steward the land. This bill, as written, will restrict our opportunities.

We are asking you to not have 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,  
Jeni Billups  
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