

Submitter: Kristi Gray

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

To: 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 Kristi Gray and I am a Curry County resident. My family has been here for almost 7 years. I have lived in Oregon all my life.

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 love and appreciate farm stand operations and believe they have a place in every community with as much room at the table as larger operations.

I frequently go to a farm stand in Port Orford and Gold Beach that would not meet the acreage requirements in section 2.2 of the bill.

Small farms need to have the same opportunities to sell their produce as larger farms.

Small farming is a part of the beauty of rural America and being able to see, support and encourage our neighbors is community connection and partnership.

I have entertained the thought of having a small stand of my own and it's very disheartening to think I may not be able to should this bill pass.

What larger scale farms do is great, too, but there is absolutely no reason why we shouldn't be able to have all of these smaller options to compete with larger marketplaces. They all offer value and all appeal differently depending on what the patrons are interested in.

Why should a small farm be any less legitimate than a large farm when it comes to defining farm use?

Agritourism events are a nice seasonal idea, however, having access to year round

baked goods, home grown veggies, berries, fruits, preserves and the like is so much more valuable for everyone.

I am 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. Both ideas should be able to thrive, not just one that would shut down so many community treasures here in Curry County and beyond.

Thank you,

Kristi Gray
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