

Submitter: Dennis Hitchcock

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

My name is Dennis Hitchcock and I live in Bandon, Oregon.

I am writing today in opposition to HB4153. I grew up on a small homesteaded family farm in Montana. My mother maintained a steady cashflow for our family by selling farm fresh eggs from our chickens and cream from the cows we milked. This money was critical to our survival during the long months of growing season and final sale of grain and hay crops which also were grown on the farm. I can truly say that I know what it means to have a small farm stand that provides much needed income for survival.

Bigger is often times not better when it comes to farms. Small operations, intensively cared for and worked by those directly connected to the land often provide semi-rural residents a source of healthy food that would not otherwise be available. These small farm stands and gardens sustain us. During many months of the year I eat food EVERY DAY that is generated by local Bandon area producers that would be negatively impacted by HB4135. These farms also sustain the families that own them. They are our neighbors, friends, community volunteers and often donors to local food banks.

Given my background I am well aware of the trends toward "agri-entertainment." While such operations may provide some sense of a "farm" experience they do not really provide the knowledge and food generated by small farms and farm stands. I urge you to not limit the operations of small farmers and their modest retail farm stand sales. There is room in our farm communities for both large and small operations. Please consider the negative impact of the current language of HB4135 and the burden it places on smaller farms. It's time for you to go back to the drawing board and create legislation that meets the needs of all and not just a few farms.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dennis Hitchcock