

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

Hello, I am Gale Ousele, 8105-A Slab Creek Road, Neskowin, Oregon.

I strongly oppose HB4153.

Farm stands are an important part of local economies and culture. They bring people in contact with local farmers, provide income streams for the growers, and diversity to our food needs. To assume that these benefits can or should not be fulfilled by small-acreage operations shows a lack of understanding of what is needed to grow quality food.

HB 4153, as written, restricts who is allowed to have a farm stand, replaces current definitions with “Farm Stores”, and gives large land owners privileges at the expense of small farm stands in Oregon.

I am deeply concerned about this issue because I live in a rural area and depend on local farmers, including some very small farms, for reliable, fresh, sustainable food. Many of my county neighbors depend on revenues from the fruits (and vegetables and eggs!) of their garden labors. Gardening and farming are not the same as destination party events!

The entrepreneurial spirit shown on very small farms is a foundation of our country and promotes local economies and healthy neighborhoods. Small farms are just as valid as large landholdings!

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.

Thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gale Ousele

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