

Submitter: Bill Bold

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

I am writing in opposition to HB4153. In reading the measure's text I note that up to 45% of farm acreage can be put to non-farm uses and still keep the lower tax rate Oregon gives to agriculture operations. For starters the lower tax rate will give "farm stores" a structural economic advantage over equivalent stores located on non-farm land. Secondly it requires county governments to provide services to farms that they would not otherwise have to provide, while simultaneously depriving county governments of the tax revenue they would otherwise receive if these stores were taxed properly.

For decades Oregon has made a deliberate attempt to concentrate commercial activity within urban growth boundaries while protecting its agriculture operations through zoning. Section 215 already has a dizzying array of non-farm activity that still gets the favorable tax treatment of agriculture. Let's draw the line here and reject this measure.