

Submitter: Michael Dunn

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Subject: Strongly Oppose HB 4153 – Protect Small Coastal Farms and Local Food Access

Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water,

I am writing as a resident (and supporter) of small farms in southern coastal Oregon to urge you to reject HB 4153, which would impose burdensome minimum size and permitting requirements that many of our local operations simply cannot meet.

In our region, farms are typically much smaller than those inland due to steep terrain, high land costs, and the need to serve niche markets in scattered, remote communities. These small-scale producers rely on established farm stands and small stores to sell directly to neighbors—providing fresh, affordable, locally grown food that larger supply chains often cannot deliver reliably.

HB 4153 would unfairly penalize these farms by making direct-to-consumer sales more difficult or impossible without meeting acreage/production thresholds designed for larger operations. This creates an uneven playing field that ignores the geographic realities of the southern coast—no vast flat fields here like in the Willamette Valley or Rogue Valley. Our limited arable land means small farms are the norm, not the exception.

Worse, this comes at a precarious time:

Geopolitical tensions and potential supply chain disruptions loom.

Our fragile rural coastal roads frequently collapse or close.

The ever-present risk of a major Cascadia earthquake could sever trucking routes for days or weeks.

In such a vulnerable area, the last thing our communities need is state policy that hampers the very small farms producing and selling food right here on the ground.

These operations deliver a vital service: reliable, fresh food security for isolated coastal towns.

Yes, our farms may appear “too small” on paper, but they are essential. Harming their ability to operate existing stands and stores harms every resident who depends on them.

HB 4153 fails to treat all Oregon farms and communities equitably. Coastal producers face different constraints and serve different needs than inland ones. We cherish—and urgently need—our local small farms.

Please vote NO on HB 4153 and work toward solutions that support, rather than burden, the smallest-scale producers who keep our rural food systems alive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Dunn

Gold Beach, OR.