

Submitter: Ben Haas

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

HB 4153 gives privileges to “farm stores” that far exceed those given to other types of permits. A cider business, for example, can only sell retail items directly related to the cider it produces; sales of incidental items and services are capped at 25 percent of the income from sales of cider; and agri-tourism and commercial events are limited in several ways. All of these features ensure that a cidery is first and foremost a farm that grows apples and produces cider. This bill allows “farm stores” to sell any kind of retail items, removes any limit on the amount of those sales, and allows unlimited entertainment events. If this bill were passed, there would be an immediate push to restore parity for other types of permits, a race to the bottom in which farm land would no longer be protected in any way.

The overreach in this bill would be devastating for farmers who are simply trying to farm. Land use law is complicated, and changes of this magnitude should not be rammed through the short session.