

Submitter: Richard Fiala
On Behalf Of: One of Oregon's Century Farms
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

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

My Name is Richard Fiala and I am a FARM STAND OPERATOR in Rural Clackamas County near West Linn. My family's farm is an Oregon Century Farm established in 1906. Additionally, the current owners/operators can claim being 5th generation Oregonians since our ancestors came across the Oregon Trail by Covered wagon in 1848. The next 2 generations of our family work our small farm and look forward to growing food for the surrounding communities. If you make smart decisions not simple decisions that affect the people who have followed the rules and are really farming, not just a resale, retail outlet or in many cases not even growing anything. I am writing to you today to express my opposition to HB 4153. Farm stands are a vital part of connecting the public with our food system and building an understanding of what it takes to go from field to fork. But HB 4153 would restrict who is allowed to have a farm stand, replace current definitions with Farm Stores, and give large land owners privileges at the expense of small farm stands in Oregon. We need to find a better solution.

I care about this because I and many other Farmers and Ranchers hold our land use laws in reverence. Most of us, would change this or that but not throw it on the fire as certain Supporters of this Bill seem to desire. When I was but child, I remember Governor McCall fighting for Senate Bill 100 and telling anyone and everyone how important it is for all generations of the future. My mother explained to me that this Bill would protect Oregon from becoming one large, urbanized area from Portland to Eugene. You committee members who will decide on this jaded and self-serving bill must justify if this will be the next surgical slice in dismembering our fragile system

You have the opportunity to choose siding with those who believe we should have free reign on what we do with our land or side with a system that is not broken but does need some repair. Also, you should ask yourselves about how many "farmstands are not in compliance with or don't even have farmstand permits. On closer examination you would find Agritourism businesses who do not even grow any farm stuffs. Within 12 miles of my farm, I know of two farmstands where no produce is displayed only retail products for the appropriate season. A third violation is a location that sets up their "temporary" 90-day farmstand in June for fireworks and keep it erected until Christmas tree season is over. This location does not grow produce or raise livestock. I mention all this because it's not fair to those of us who

follow the existing rules.

If you pass this Bill through your committee, you will not be fixing anything, I ask that you pay attention to the groups who care about Farming and Land use, instead of the groups who hijacked this topic to weaken our land use laws not to strengthen them.

Small farms need to have the same opportunities to sell their produce as larger farms.

Why should large acreage farmers gain privileges at the expense of smaller acre farmers?

Why should a small farm be any less legitimate than a large farm when it comes to defining farm use?

Farms should not be just about agritourism, When the primary purpose of a farm stand becomes agritourism events, not the sale of farm products we and you are listening to the wrong people.

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.

Please kill this bill in committee.

Thank you,

Richard Fiala
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