

Dear Committee,

House Bill 4153 should not pass. I am deeply opposed to the serious ramifications, if approved, that would be set into motion.

I am a long time resident of Sauvie Island, and have lived on a small farm for 34 years. It is the land use laws of Oregon that have allowed the rural nature of the Island to continue and benefit, not only Islanders, but the larger, regional community who depend on the food it produces.

Importantly, I was also a member of the *Community Advisory Committee* for the ***Multnomah County Comprehensive Plan*** which looked, in depth, at the issue of agritourism, and what it would mean to rural Multnomah County and directly to Sauvie Island.

From these meetings, it was clear that most residents of Sauvie Island did not wish to see it turn into a place of commercialism. Sauvie Island soils rival some of the best in the nation. To change the land from a farming community, shifting agriculture to the back burner and allowing non-farm activities as primary use on farmland, would be a serious, and irreversible, mistake.

Farm stands are a different matter, and already occur, without any change in land use laws, on the island. Oregon Land Use laws *allow* all the things that people advocating for HB 4153 are saying would stop if this measure doesn't pass. What the law does, however, is put guardrails to protect prime farmland, and avoid speculation and commercialization, which would end the rural nature of this unique Island and its critical purpose to – first and foremost-- grow food for an increasingly hungry world.

There is another reason I think is of great importance to consider.

I am a wildlife biologist by profession. Sauvie Island provides essential habitat for migrating waterfowl, migrating birds, overwintering sandhill cranes, nesting ospreys, bald eagles, threatened purple martins, and more. To turn it into collection of commercial zones and non-farm strip-mall enterprises would destroy this feature, which is another reason that retaining its rural nature is *essential*.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of all of the reasons thousands of Oregonians **oppose HB 4153**.

Sincerely,

Marcy Cottrell Houle
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