

Submitter: Sofia Zielinski

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

I am strongly in support of this bill and its potential to continue to allow farm stands to use their land for other uses involving the public that promote their farming practice. E.Z. Orchards on Hazelgreen road is an excellent example of this and has been a really important to my family.

I understand the concern and care to keep farm land as farm land, and I'm sure that some organizations and farms do come close to the line of overstepping that boundary, but is it worth it to make it impossible for all small farms? Absolutely not. Many of these farms are engaging in appropriate non farm use on their land with the public, which is crucial to their business and is a large part of what allows small farms to KEEP FARMING and support themselves. This bill would inhibit E.Z.Ochards from continuing as it is in every light possible. The family would have to stop farming altogether as they would no longer be able to support themselves. If protecting farm land and keeping it being farmed is the concern, then this bill is NOT the answer. Their pumpkin patch in October is a widely loved by local families. Giving the public the change to engage with agriculture and appreciate the importance of farming which directly. In my opinion, making it impossible for the public to engage with farms in this way is directly not in support of farming at all.

Farms support farms. E.z.orchards sells fresh local produce from many different small farmers that they have cultivated relationships with over many years. Without that produce, e.z. Orchards would not be hardly the farm destination it is. This bill would mean only apples pears and peaches could be sold. If we want to protect farmers, let them help each other! Sell each others produce. The wholesale market has changed, grocery stores are huge, consumers (myself included) work so much and do not have time to go to the grocery store and then go to ez just to get apples, they will shop conveniently where they can get everything in one stop. No longer are households supported by one income. This bill passing would shut down a farm that means so much to mine and countless families in my community, which I don't think supports the values of farmers.

I ask you to support this bill, thank you.