

Submitter: Alyssa Stoppel
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or HB4153
Topic:

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 Alyssa Stoppel, and I am a community member and future small farmer in Veneta. I am writing to express my opposition to HB 4153 as written and the -2 amendment.

Farm stands are a vital part of connecting people to their food and to the farmers who grow it. They help families understand where their food comes from and make it possible for small farms to stay financially viable. HB 4153, as written, would restrict who is allowed to operate a farm stand, replace current definitions with “farm stores,” and give advantages to large landowners at the expense of small farms. Oregon can do better than this.

My husband and I are currently saving to buy a small piece of land so we can start farming to support our family and contribute to feeding our community. We have three young children, and we care deeply about building a future where local families can access fresh, healthy food grown close to home. Policies that make it harder for small farms to sell directly to their communities make it harder for new farmers like us to even get started.

I have also been a CSA subscriber for several years, and that experience has shown me firsthand how important small farms are. They strengthen local economies, build relationships between farmers and neighbors, and keep food dollars circulating in our communities. Small farms may not have the acreage of larger operations, but they play an outsized role in food security, environmental stewardship, and community well-being.

It is concerning to see a proposal that would place a higher burden on the smallest farms while opening the door for larger operations to expand event-based uses. Farm stands should remain primarily about selling farm products, not shifting toward agritourism models that smaller farms often cannot support. A small farm should not be considered less legitimate than a large one when it comes to defining farm use.

We should be lowering barriers for the next generation of farmers, not raising them. Please oppose HB 4153 and the -2 amendment in their current form and work toward a solution that protects opportunities for small farms across Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Alyssa Stoppel
Veneta, OR