

TO: 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 Leah Rosin and I am a community member in Eugene. I am writing to you today to express my opposition to HB 4153 as it is written and the -2 amendment. 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 as it is written 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 grew up on a small family farm in Oregon and my mom is still farming. The margins for small farms are narrow, and most of them operate at a loss or require that the farmers have second jobs to keep things going. To put additional requirements and restrictions on the sales of farm products from small farms is punitive and will force more small farms and farmers to lose opportunities to market their products.

In times of pandemic and supply chain shortages, and considering the loss of farms across the country, now is NOT the time to do anything that would damage the ability of farmers to be economically viable. This bill has some good and well-intended provisions, but the limits on acreage size and permit requirements specifically are harmful to local farmers in my neighborhood here in Eugene, including my mom's farm.

These small farms and farmstands connect neighbors, and connect the public to the food system and farmers in ways that grocery retailers cannot.

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.

Thank you,

Leah Rosin
Eugene, OR