

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 Patrick Hunter and I am a FARMER/RANCHER/COMMUNITY MEMBER/FARM STAND OPERATOR in Springfield. 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 cannot see how cutting small family farms out of the farming industry in Oregon benefits Oregonians. Large farms serve many branches of that industry already. They don't need to take over those of the small acre farmers. Small acre farmers are essential to meeting the needs of quality conscious, environmentally conscious families like ours. Small acre farmers can take the time to talk to their customers directly, can stay in-touch with what the people they serve want, and can keep their prices lower through creative collaboration with the community like what I see at our local Youth Farm. They make Oregon a richer place to live in so many ways. Please don't run them out of business.

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,

Patrick Hunter  
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