

Submitter: Julie Hackett

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

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 Julie Hackett and I am a farmer with a 5 acre property, growing produce and herbs on one acre. 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 sell products direct to customers at local farmers markets, and opening a farm stand has always been a part of my business plan. A farm stand would serve my rural neighbors and community members who do not enjoy the crowd and bustle of larger markets.

The way this law is written would place barriers on the growth of my farm business. Placing an unfair income requirement on beginning small farms serves no one. My rural community deserves to have access to the agricultural products grown all around us.

Some parts of this law are needed improvements to the current law. Explicitly allowing farm related education, farm-to-table events and the inclusion of products made under the Farm Direct rule as farm products are necessary clarifications that support independent farm businesses.

I think that removing requirements that farm stands and stores primarily sell (75%) farm products is a mistake and would change the culture of our rural farmland away from independent small businesses and favor corporate landholders making more profits on events.

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,

Julie Hackett  
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