

Submitter: Elizabeth Jacobson

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

My family are orchardists and have been farming in the Hood River Valley for 44 years. We have also hosted weddings on our farm since 2005 and helped craft the legal structure for a conditional use permit to host weddings. Our county was the first in Oregon to have such a permit process. We also have a farm stand. While the permit process is rigorous, it works well because it also works to protect the land we farm with stringent guidelines for the conditional use. This poorly written bill, while it purports to aid farmers, will do the opposite. It seems to allow too many unregulated uses on that farmland--uses that may make it hard for a farming neighbor to continue to farm. Perhaps the 25% rule for farm stands could be amended a bit, but the majority of the revenue should still come from on farm products. Please continue to protect the farmland that makes Oregon so special. If there was a way to supplement small family farms' income so that they can better compete with larger corporate farms, that would be ideal. They do this in many European countries because family farms are considered to be part of the national heritage. Please vote no on this terrible bill.