

Greetings 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 Alisa Ocean and I am Manager for the Cave Junction Farmers Market in Southern Oregon. 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.

This is an important issue for me, because many of the farms in the Illinois Valley where I live are small start up farms on small acreage who would find it very difficult to apply for a farm stand permit, with the way HB 4153 is written. Many of the farmers that bring produce to our market, also depend on their small farm stands, and this bill would drastically inhibit opportunities for earning income from their farm goods. I worry that a bill like this would create even more obstacles for these farmers and put them out of business. Our community depends on small local farmers to provide high quality foods, and these dedicated farmers depend on having their farm stand as a viable way to support their farming endeavors. There are some great ideas in this bill, but with the harm this would cause small farmers, I urge you to vote no, and create a bill with better language that is fair to the small farmers in Oregon that our communities rely on.

Please don't place 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,

Alisa Ocean
O'Brien OR resident