

Submitter: Chris Roehm
On Behalf Of: All small farm operations in Oregon
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

As a long time owner/operator of a working farm in Washington County I oppose HB 4153.

My wife and I have made a living growing mostly produce on a parcel of land in Verboort, north of Forest Grove, since 2003. We sold directly at Portland Farmers Market. We made tons of great friends, helped to support a beautiful community of people, and contributed to the economic and cultural vitality of Portland and Oregon.

As we enter our 60s we have recognized a need to slow down and to ease the stress on our bodies. We have left our beloved farmers markets behind. Our intention is to sell directly to some of the Portland chefs we came to know at market and to sell directly to our friends and neighbors through a stand on the farm. HB 4153 as written would prevent that.

From the bill: "Less than 40 acres but at least 20 acres and with at least 15 acres employed for farm use" Our parcel is 39.26 acres so it fits in this category. We do not and have never in 23 years of successful commercial operation used 15 acres in production. Thus our farm, even at it's peak productivity, would be exempt from eligibility to run a farm stand. This bill was written by people who do not understand the basic realities of running a small, successful direct-to-consumer farming business in the state of Oregon. Please return HB 4153 to committee for revision and include some people who know what they are talking about when you do so.

Thanks!

Chris Roehm
Square Peg Farm, Inc.
Forest Grove, Oregon