

February 11, 2026

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TO: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water
RE: House Bill 4153

I am one of the founders of the Sauvie Island Conservancy, which has worked for many years to protect island farmland. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 4153, which would significantly change how farm stands and agritourism are regulated in Oregon.

This bill would effectively destroy the protections that keep the island from converting from a predominantly agricultural area to an event venue with significant non-agricultural commercial and agritourism uses.

Current regulations ensure that the agritourism events are both related to and supportive of the agricultural uses and incidental and subordinate to farm use on the property—limiting the size, scale and frequency of such events, which is important for maintaining the agricultural character of the area and also to ensure livability for people living in the area.

This bill allows large, permanent multi-use structures for nonfarm retail sales, food and beverage service, and unlimited events on agricultural land without safeguards to ensure that agriculture remains the primary use of the property. Commercial destinations of this kind require significant upfront capital costs that could turn EFU zones into a pay-to-play system that undermines farmers and prioritizes commercial development. The bill fails to address impacts on land affordability and farm viability, two primary issues for small and beginning farmers.

Ten years ago, when the county updated its comprehensive plan, the clear and overwhelming message from the Sauvie Island Community was that island residents wanted the island to retain its existing agricultural character and livability

HB 4153 would significantly weaken Oregon's long-standing protections for EFU land and undermine Sauvie Island as an actual farming community.

Regards,
Donna Matrazzo