

Submitter: Patricia Wentz

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 Patricia Wentz, and I am a community member in Banks, OR.

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 frequent farm stores that may or may not adhere to the random standards that you have created in this bill, specifically in section 2.2. I really don't understand why you would impose such requirements on any farmer, especially those who are smaller and are just trying to get a little supplemental income and not allow food to go to waste. Size should have no bearing on the ability to sell extra produce. What about the young entrepreneur who is trying to start learning how to run a business, who created a little stand to sell extra produce that the family grows? Do they have to live on a major farm to be able to see this dream come to life? Why should they suffer because they don't live on a farm that meets apparently randomly selected criteria? Think about it, the experience they gain will enable them to learn about how to work with the community, assess their needs, learn money handling, and how to plan for the next year's crops. It has the potential to create self-driven workers who can build the economy. Putting the small farmer at yet another disadvantage isn't the right way to run a government. Everyone should be able to participate without fear of reprisal as long as they are doing so honestly. Adding MORE governmental regulations isn't the answer.

We are asking you not to have a higher burden on the smallest farms. This bill takes away opportunities from small landholders 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,

NAME: Patricia Wentz

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