

Submitter: Sarah Chaney

On Behalf Of: Exclusive Farm Use land and small-scale farmers

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

Topic: HB4153

Co-chairs Helm and Owens and members of the Committee

Please vote no on HB 4153.

This bill eviscerates exclusive farm use zoning and destroys the land use system that makes Oregon special.

It encroaches on Exclusive Farm Use land with retail enterprises that will compete with small stands that exclusively sell their own farm goods. This bill gives preferential treatment to large landholders and corporate conglomerate “farms” to encourage mixed use of their farmland and aims to punish the owners of smaller acreage by making it extremely difficult to sell their produce at their own property. If they can, they fear they won’t be able to compete with the larger stores.

Many farmers submitting testimony depend on their small-scale farm stands and are dismayed that this bill will make it impossible for them to share their product with the community and supplement their income so that they can continue supporting their families. How is it that in a time of severe hits to farming from tariffs and severe weather events with no federal help that the legislature this year is ready to deliver another gut-punch to small-scale farms and the protections surrounding our precious farmland?

Yes, the amendments address some of the issues brought up by those opposing this bill. But the biggest issues are that even with the amendments,

- The bill still approves using EFU land for these “farm stores.”
- Counties are forced to approve these farm stores because with this bill they can’t say no altogether.
- The bill is allowing larger retailers, who will handle other merchandise, to compete with the small stands that are exclusively farm goods. The amendments have reduced the amount of other merchandise, but still allow it.
- The bill is allowing larger retailers, who will handle other merchandise, to compete with the small stands that are exclusively farm goods. The amendments have reduced the amount of other merchandise, but still allow it. Moreover, the bill has so many loopholes that none of these operations need have any real basis in local farming.

This bill is controversial and complicated with wide-ranging and life changing effects for farmers across the state. There are too many small-scale farmers submitting testimony that this bill will change their ability to make a living to ignore.

HB 4153 should not be pushed through this short session but rather die or endure a robust debate among a wide range of participants.

Thank you for voting no to stop this runaway Trojan horse that would erode EFU.