

Submitter: Janis Pate
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or HB4153
Topic:

My Name is Janis Pate and I am a Farmer, Farm Stand Operator and Community Member in NEWBERG. I am writing to you today to express my strong 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

Consider answering some of these questions or using these statements as a jumping off point in your testimony:

- * I frequently go to several farm stands that would not meet the acreage requirements in section 2.2 of the bill.
- * Small farms need to have the same opportunities to sell their produce as larger farms.
- * My farm is 38 acres, so I meet the requirement but numerous growers that I know would not.
- * Why should large acreage farmers gain privileges at the expense of smaller acre farmers? This is literally the opposite of what the spirit of most Oregon farming families believe. We look out for each other and that makes Oregon agriculture special.
- * Why should a small farm be any less legitimate than a large farm when it comes to defining farm use? This smacks of caving to those with the most dollars, again, the opposite of what draws consumers to Oregon agriculture.
- * The money spent at farm stands goes right back into local communities.
- * If the primary purpose of a farm stand becomes agritourism events, then the entire area will suffer. Those who don't live and farm here have a very difficult time believing that to be the case. Event planners are salivating at the thought of blowing our carefully protected EFUs wide open as we speak. ??As an example of the impact, A very large agricultural building was purchased nearby a few years ago (50 acres; all but the house and shop leased out for grass seed and hazelnut farming) and turned into an event space (outside of current use laws). There were 150+ vehicles every weekend night, zero crowd control, rifles being shot, drunk driving, speakers so advanced and loud that we could identify individual instruments from half mile away, sheriffs called and denied entry. So, as a farmer, when I get up at 4:30 am during the heat of summer, I have only had 2 hours sleep because someone thought

agritourism deserves to own the entire few mile area more than actual working farmers. ??The other thing that I don't hear anyone talking about is the impact of runoff water when (large) commercial buildings are allowed to be added to what is zoned as EFU. My property now floods immediately during rain because a conditional use permit was allowed for a lovely winery and tasting room next door. The more the state and county continue to allow commercialization of EFU land, the less food we grow and tourism we attract — can't we learn from what Napa has turned into? Surely Oregon is better than this.?

We are asking you to not have 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,

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