

Submitter: Keith and Rachael Walton DeBuse
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Co Chairs Helm and Owen, Vice-Chair McDonald, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water,

Our names are Keith Walton and Rachael DeBuse. We have a small farm north of Eugene in the Santa Clara area. We are writing to express our opposition to HB 4153 as it is written and the -2 amendment. The bill as written would restrict who is allowed to have a farm stand and give large land owners privileges at the expense of small farms in Oregon. We would request you revisit this and find a more equitable solution.

~HB 4153-2 would limit our marketing options, even though we are a long established farm on land that has been in our family for over 100 years. Many different marketing schemes have been used over the years including on-farm sales, wholesale, farmer's markets, u-pick, cannery crops, grain and seed crops, and also renting plots of very prime soils to start-up operations seeking to expand. The neighborhood of small farms around us has also thrived with varied marketing approaches, and very important among them are farm stand sales.

~If the current standards for small farm on-farm sales via farm stand were to not continue, the diversity of operations in our area that have been serving the growing Eugene area community of buyers would not be able to fully participate in the resilient locally responsible food system that we have all worked so hard to build.

~Small farm operations may need to scale back on sales as farmers age but cannot afford to stop working. Operating a farm stand on site can enable continued sales while being less rigorous and demanding as other sales approaches. We anticipate this will be the case for ourselves .

We are asking you to not place a higher burden on the smallest farms. This bill takes away opportunities from small land holders and farms in order for larger operations to host more events. This does not best accommodate all farms equally. A better deal must be found.

Thank you,

Keith Walton and Rachael DeBuse

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