

February 11, 2026

Dear Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and members of the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please reject HB 4153.

This is a poorly written bill that would allow construction of farm stores on our valuable EFU farmlands without mitigating harm to other nearby farms. As a result, the bill would weaken Oregon's long-standing protections for exclusive farm use (EFU) land. The 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.

Conflicts between farm related events and activities and nearby farms are real and hurt farm communities. We can't allow stores that aren't closely tied to farm activity to hurt farmers and our agricultural lands. Ag lands are attractive for these stores because the land is cheaper than more appropriately zoned land.

I shop at farmstands and farmers markets, as well as direct sales by farmers to the public, but not as this bill would allow. Our existing farm stand provisions work well -- we shouldn't undermine them by adopting a poorly considered bill like this that will do more harm than good. We need better written, more thoughtful requirements that tie non-farm stores like this to ongoing agricultural production. This bill as written is an invitation to commercial development on farm lands.

Commercial development belongs inside cities, inside UBGs, not on farm lands.

Please oppose HB 4153.

Thank you for your consideration.

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