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February 7, 2019

House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use
State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony on HB 2355 – Cider Businesses

Chair Clem and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2355. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

1000 Friends of Oregon opposes this bill. The bill allowing cider business was passed in 2017 to allow cider business on farmland the same land use entitlements as wineries. These entitlements are many. They include the ability to have several types of commercial activities on the farm property that would be otherwise disallowed. These are permitted as recognition that cider production, like winemaking, is ultimately tied to the agricultural use of the property. But this bill removes that connection by removing the requirements that the cider business operator own an onsite orchard or an adjacent orchard or have a contract to purchase apples from a contiguous orchard operate the cider business. Without these requirements, which are already very flexible and accommodating, this use is simply a commercial use that is not tied to farming at all.

If this bill passes it will allow a commercial use that is not tied to farming to occur on farmland as an outright use with no conditional use permit. It will open the door to other nonfarm commercial uses that lack a nexus to farming. And it will weaken Oregon's farm zone, which makes it harder for Oregon farmers to stay in business. We respectfully request that you vote this bill down.

Respectfully submitted,

Meriel L. Darzen
Rural Lands Staff Attorney