



Oregon's Farmworker Union

March 21st, 2019

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Senate Bills 103 and 104.

PCUN is Oregon's Farmworker Union. PCUN's fundamental goal is to empower farmworkers and low wage Latino workers to understand and take action against systematic exploitation and all of its effects. On behalf of PCUN's 6,000 members, I would like to share our concerns with SB 103, which would classify dairies exceeding size as industrial facilities.

It is no secret that environmental contamination presents a major problems for our community. The economy and health of farm workers and low wage Latino workers are tied to the land, and we are already seeing how climate change makes their jobs more difficult. From decreased crop yields impacting profits, to hotter, drier summers that create strenuous working conditions, those who work the land are put increasingly at risk.

However, we would like to see a bill that address environmental impacts *and* takes into account the workforce and their livelihoods. As the bill is currently written, this would classify certain dairies as industrial dairies and in turn be subjected to different regulations. We are specifically concerned with how this bill would impact unionized workers at Threemile Canyon Farm.

In the early 2000's, PCUN worked heavily with the United Farmworkers Union in Boardman, Oregon to win a collective bargaining agreement with Threemile Canyon Farms. This collective bargaining agreement was a milestone for many of our workers. Through this collective bargaining agreement, 300 workers were able to benefit from premium pay, benefits and family health insurance. There are also job advancement and education opportunities, health, paid holidays and paid time off benefits, just to name a few.

Apart from taking necessary strides with worker rights issues, Threemile canyon has also taken steps to address environmental impacts, such as an onsite digester that pulls methane gas from manure which improves air quality and powers the farm with clean energy

We are concerned that this legislation would negatively impact good union jobs, our workers and responsible, civic and environmentally minded dairy farmers. PCUN respectfully requests the committee to oppose SB 103 & 104.

Sincerely,

Martha Sonato
Political Director
PCUN, Oregon's Farmworker Union