

Dear Senators,

Thank you for taking action to curb the challenges that large scale farming brings to our state. I have done a bit of farming myself, so I come to you as someone who is NOT anti-farmer. Rather, I want to make sure we do our farming in a responsible way so that my grandchildren will enjoy the beauty of Oregon I have come to appreciate.

A high school science teacher once told me, "Dilution is the solution to pollution." While I'm not sure it holds for everything, the core concept certainly strikes a chord with me. What we have on earth has been fine and working well for a very, very long time.

Unfortunately, we have become so proficient and efficient at concentrating our efforts, that what we are doing is changing things so drastically that the earth cannot keep up the way it used to. One hundred dairy farms with 35 head of cattle spread out across the state can blend into the environment and the ecosystem can work to deal with them. ONE farm of 3500 head, however, shocks the system so intensely wherever it is located that it is environmentally overwhelming. The water draw from one watershed, the waste disposal into that same watershed, the intense crop farming to feed those dairy cows all in one place, the gases released when that many cows are kept in one place being released into one airspace,...it all just too much for one place in our human habitat to healthily accommodate.

Is it fair that other super large dairies already exist and others will not be allowed to start? Perhaps it is not fair, but giving people the right to do wrong is not fair, either. We can't legislate morality, but we can help others make better decisions by taking away bad choices. The mistakes we make in our environment now may not be fixable for many generations--which isn't fair to our children's children's children, either. As representatives of our state elected to do what's best for Oregon, please at least pass this bill as written, if not make it even more foresightful by making the maximum number of cattle smaller.

Thank you,

Eric Swehla

Portland School Teacher

Yamhill County Small Farm Owner

Tillamook County Small Family Forrester Owner