

April 1, 2021

The Honorable Senator Jeff Golden
Chair, Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2021R1/Testimony/SNRWR>

RE: OPPOSITION to SB 832

Dear Chairman Golden and Committee Members:

I submit this public testimony as a concerned businessperson. Without getting into the scientific quality of the alleged causal link between mink farming and the proliferation of COVID-19, this proposed legislation should send shivers down the spine of any businessperson and landowner in the state of Oregon. If passed, this legislation creates substantial regulatory risk for any business that could even remotely be linked to a negative public health event. For the sake of brevity, I have prepared the below chart that identifies general industry sectors and the negative public health events that could possibly be linked to them:

General Industry Description	Negative Public Health Impacts
Convenience stores	Nicotine addiction, cancers related to tobacco consumption, obesity related to overconsumption of fatty and processed foods, diseases related to obesity (cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke)
Bars and alcohol-serving establishments	Alcohol addiction, impaired driving, alcohol-related domestic violence, liver disease, heart disease, stroke, obesity from consuming too many alcohol-related calories
Fast food and quick-service-restaurants (QSRs)	Obesity related to overconsumption of fatty and processed foods, diseases related to obesity (cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke)
Gyms and exercise facilities	Negative effects of over-exertion (musculoskeletal and orthopedic injuries), sudden cardiac arrest, exacerbation of underlying or unknown cardiac and/or respiratory disorders
Gambling (casinos and video lottery)	Addiction, financial ruin, suicide
Adult video shops	Unhealthy objectification of women, pornography addiction, ruined personal relationships, financial ruin
Strip clubs	Unhealthy objectification of women, sex addiction, ruined personal relationships, financial ruin
Doctor's offices	Over-prescription of opioids, contributing to America's opioid crisis
Restaurants	Obesity related to overconsumption of fatty and processed foods and foods containing high sodium, diseases related to obesity (cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke)

Clearly, a lot of Oregon business could be linked to a lot of bad outcomes. If we start with mink farms, where do we stop? If this is our standard for "data-informed policymaking", a lot of business owners and their employees ought to start looking for new jobs.

More importantly, can the risk of mink-related COVID-19 transmission be mitigated through good manufacturing practices, vaccination of employees, and other control measures? Has this been sufficiently studied prior to proposing that these mink farms simply “go away”? Has there been documented widespread proliferation of disease? What is the risk, and how is it quantified? Or, is this a ruse to eliminate a maligned industry under the auspices of COVID-19? That would be shameful and disingenuous at best.

Aside from the questionable causal link between the existence of mink farms and the spread of COVID-19, a concern for every Oregon landowner should be the legislative power flex to decree a land use so vile and repulsive that it warrants shutting down of the operation without due process and without compensation. If a municipal body desired a piece of land for a public interest, yet proposed taking it via eminent domain power without fair value compensation to its owner, they would be laughed out of court.

This proposed legislation MUST include a provision for the just compensation of aggrieved land and personal property owners. While that would change the legislative trajectory of this policymaking, it is the right and just thing to do for the affected Oregonians. Ramrodding this legislation into existence without a compensation provision will all but assure it results in extensive, expensive, and unnecessary litigation.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a crisis on many levels, it should not be used as an excuse for such poor, misguided policymaking.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. W. Cantonwine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

S. W. Cantonwine
Wilsonville, Oregon