

GERRY BOSS, M.D.

April 2, 2021

Sen. Jeff Golden, Chair
Committee Members
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

RE: SB 832

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in my capacity as a Board Member for the Center for a Humane Economy and in support of SB 832. I am a Distinguished Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). I received my clinical training in Internal Medicine at The Johns Hopkins Hospital, followed by fellowship training at the Massachusetts General Hospital. I have been clinically active throughout my career, and have served in numerous administrative and leadership roles at UCSD. I have published almost 200 peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals. I feel I am well qualified to comment on SB 832, but my comments are my own and do not represent the views of UCSD.

As you know, SB 832 would prohibit mink farming in Oregon and will compensate affected farmers. My support for this important legislation is based on the following considerations:

- The COVID-19 pandemic brought the world together to develop vaccines against the virus. Several vaccines were generated in a short time, truly an unprecedented feat of science and cooperation.
- While the vaccines are effective for preventing severe disease and death, there is much we don't know. How long does protection last? Does vaccination prevent viral transmission? How effective is the vaccine against current and future variants? How long will it take to modify vaccines for pervasive variants?
- As long as these questions go unanswered, every precaution must be taken to protect public health.
- SARS-CoV-2 infection in mink is a risk to human health. Variant viruses that developed in mink were transmitted to humans in Denmark and the Netherlands. These variants could be resistant to available vaccines.

Thus, non-essential business activities that pose a threat to public health from transfer of pathogens between animals and humans should be stopped. The threat to public health is too great to ignore. I urge you to vote YES on SB 832 with a do-pass recommendation.

Thank you for considering my position on this matter.

Sincerely,

Gerry Boss, MD
Board Member
Center for A Humane Economy