

To the Chair and members of the committee:

It has come to my attention that HB2645, which exempts dog training facilities from state structural specialty codes is opening the door for numerous potential problems.

I am a horse trainer and stable owner and I train horses for a living. Allowing dog training facilities to slide into exemptions of state codes without having restrictions in place can and will create a problematic future for those people and places already established and following state guidelines already.

As a horse and barn owner, dogs can be a huge distraction and a danger to both horses and livestock, especially when unattended to. My neighbor currently has two dogs and they often will come on to my property and will spook and chase my horses and bark at them. Although my neighbor and I have discussed our situation, I cannot imagine the stress, unhappiness, and anxiety a dog training facility next door would have on me, my farm, and training business.

Dog training facilities are loud and can cause their own list of issues. Allowing them to be exempt from state specialty codes, such as the farm impact test, leads to problems, problems that currently one of my equine acquaintance's is currently having with her horse property and the 'dog training facility' next door. With exemption from state codes and without certain restrictions, protections for horses and livestock owners cannot be filed. Barking and chasing (even from the other side of the fence) are huge horse and livestock stressors. Without the farm impact test applied to dog training facilities, barking issues would go unmanaged and there would be zero grounds for filing any sort of grievances. I don't know if any of you have gone into a dog training facility, dog kennel, or even a pet store selling dogs for that matter. The barking is constant and unsettling. Imagine having your quiet farm house that you've lived in 20+ years and sitting down for dinner right as a training session occurs. The barking and yapping of the dogs for the next few hours would carry through your area (I can hear cows a mile away when they come into season) and sadly soundwaves don't change, even if you ask nicely. Now if you're irritated at the continual barking, consider the impact on the other animals in your household or on your property, think how they must feel. Herd animals are flight animals, they naturally flee (or run) at the sight or sound of danger. Imagine what constant barking would do to the livestock herd you have owned for 20+ years on your own land or even your neighbors. Your neighbor's cows could be in your backyard in seconds if they get spooked. Even the strongest of fences cannot contain livestock when cows get startled and run. Living in constant fear is not a life for a farm animal.

Now I too love dogs and have come from a small animal veterinary background. I have two dogs as well and I do feel that dog training facilities are wonderful places and have their benefit to dog owners everywhere. But I think exempting them from following certain codes is not in favor of the future of agriculture business and farming. I think there is a way where these dog facilities and current running farms and businesses can all coexist, but it will need more involvement, planning, and restrictions.

Please consider us farm and livestock owners and our concerns as you look towards exempting dog training facilities from Oregon structural specialty codes. Consider the impact on the farm animals which have been living out on these farms for all their lives. Consider taking a little more time to plan out and regulate dog facilities so the older, existing farms can also thrive alongside these up-and-coming dog training facilities. There's a way where both of these businesses and facilities can exist, there just needs to be a little more time and thought invested in it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Kim Larson-Daiker and John Daiker of Sunstone Sport Horses