

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and members of the committee,

My name is Kara Woodward and I'm excited to write in support of [HB 2616](#).

As a responsible consumer, I want to make sure that Oregon's dairy industry follows the best possible standards across the board, especially around raw milk. Unfortunately, Oregon's raw milk regulations are falling behind — it is time to revisit and upgrade our outdated raw milk laws.

After having my two boys, we started a health journey. Both my boys had health issues and I began researching how best to support their growth and development and consulting with experts. This led us to needing to source raw milk. I found it difficult to access, so many laws prevented normal sale of raw milk and so few farmers could function under these laws. My first experience regularly purchasing raw milk meant I had to drive two hours once a week with my baby and toddler to get what we needed. My next source was closer to home but after a short time, this farmer gave up selling raw milk due to the hardship of regulations.

If passed, HB 2616 will ensure that Oregon producers are able to meet the growing demands for raw milk in our state safely and effectively, by **implementing nationally-recognized testing, safety and risk mitigation measures** and **giving cow dairies the same opportunities that goat and sheep dairies already have**.

For licensed dairies, raw cow's milk is currently off the table. Oregon allows the retail sale of raw milk from sheep and goats, but not from cows — no other state makes this distinction in the retail market. It's time to fix this discrepancy **and** improve the safety, testing and training standards for raw milk production across the board — whether you're milking goats, sheep or cows.

For smaller licensed-exempt producers, HB 2616 offers critical upgrades as well. If passed, this legislation will give small cow dairies new possibilities to grow, expand their business and reach more consumers in this growing industry. HB 2616 will also allow small producers more flexibility in how they get their products to their consumers — eliminating the burdensome requirement that sales transactions take place on-site. These small, common-sense upgrades will help both Oregon's farmers and the customers they serve.

As a consumer myself, I am thrilled to see this bill before your committee. If passed, this bill will help me better access raw milk for my family.

Oregon's raw milk policies are out of date and it's time for a change. This legislation will raise the raw milk standards in Oregon and ensure better transparency, access and accountability across the board.

**I urge your support for HB 2616.**

Thank you,

Kara Woodward