

Submitter: Benjamin Ben-Baruch

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

TSupport for SB85, the factory farm moratorium bill

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee,

I urge you to support SB 85. I urge you to support Oregon farmers and preserve Oregon farmland. Protecting factory farms harms both and harms our environment.

Factory farms drain and pollute Oregon's water resources. Oregon's 11 mega dairies use the same amount of water every day as a small city.

In addition to catastrophic manure spills, the sheer amount of manure that factory farms produce often exceeds what crops can absorb leading to polluting and unhealthy runoff into waterways.

Factory farms release harmful and dangerous greenhouse gases. Oregon's 11 mega-dairy facilities produce over 17 million kilograms of methane gas every year – the same as the emissions from 318,000 passenger vehicles. This adds to global warming and undermines our state's policies to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Protect Rural Communities and Small Farms by passing SB 85.

In the eight years after the state's largest mega-dairy began operations in 1999, more than 600 small-scale dairies went out of business. Oregon's small farmers have long been producing healthy, safe, and abundant food for Oregonians with more conscientious stewardship of the environment, our communities, and our food supply than factory farms. Small family farms enhance rural economic stability and provide the basis for thriving and vibrant rural communities. Factory farms extract wealth from our rural communities.

Protect Public Health:

A factory farm moratorium would protect us from the cancer-causing drinking water and toxic air quality that threatens the health of local communities. Factory farms are breeding grounds for disease. Due to unsanitary and cramped conditions, animals can carry and spread pathogens to humans, like the highly pathogenic avian influenza (bird flu) and H1N1 (swine flu).

Protect Farm Workers and Frontline Communities:

Oregon needs safe and dignified workplaces that support healthy, thriving

communities. At factory farms, workers are often forced into unsafe working conditions and exposed to hazardous chemicals, fumes, and particulate matter. Factory farms are an environmental justice issue. Many of Oregon's largest dairy factory farms are in rural Latinx communities, and these communities disproportionately suffer the adverse effects of these factory farms.

Protect Animal Welfare:

Oregon has progressive, humane values. Yet farmed animals in industrial-scale settings suffer immensely.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Ben-Baruch
Ashland OR