

Submitter: Carol Moore

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

As a citizen and taxpayer in Oregon, I ask the Oregon legislature to protect our environment, our economy, and our health. Please put a moratorium on the approval of additional factory farms while studying their impacts by passing SB 85, the Factory Farm Moratorium bill, in the 2023 legislative session

Factory farm operations are currently allowed on protected farmland through Oregon's "freedom to farm" laws, which considers all meat production as a legitimate form of farming, regardless of scale. Clearly, there is a significant regulatory gap that must be addressed before any more industrial-sized CAFOs are permitted to operate in Oregon.

Over the past decade, such large-scale operations have pushed hundreds of family farms out of business in favor of corporations that seek to maximize profit regardless of the costs borne by the state, including:

Environmental harm

- Exponential increase in the depletion of well water
- Climate damaging emissions such as methane and nitrous oxide
- Land, air, and water pollution from waste runoff
- Decimation of wild bird populations from outbreaks of highly transmissible avian influenza

Socioeconomic Harm

- Odor, traffic, and other nuisances to adjacent property
- Biological waste (including both manure and dead animals)
- Property devaluation
- Higher consumer prices due to monopolies and periodic destruction of infected animals (avian flu, swine flu, etc.)

Public Health Harm

- Breeding grounds for zoonotic diseases that may evolve to be transmitted to humans (such as Covid-19)
- Development of drug resistant bacteria through prophylactic use of antibiotics (nearly 70% of antibiotic use is for animal agriculture)

Simply put, Oregonians should not be subsidizing corporate profits by sacrificing public and environmental health, especially as we face the climate crisis, drought, and pandemic.

Conveniently ignored in this debate is the suffering endured by millions of animals raised in industrial sized CAFOs. A single chicken factory farm will have over 580,000 birds raised indoors, along with their waste. Three Mile Canyon, one mega-dairy in Oregon, is the second largest in the country with 70,000 cows living their entire lives in cramped, inhumane conditions. Ditto baby cows (taken from their mothers at birth and placed in tiny opaque crates which prevent light or movement to damage their tender flesh to produce the delicacy served as veal) and pigs (artificially impregnated and then kept in crates to restrict any natural movement). The debate about animal welfare is complex, but important to have. All animals experience pain and emotions. As humans, we are ethically obligated to consider the impact our choices have on their lives.

Finally, some argue that access to cheap protein is worth the state bearing these externalized costs. Perhaps they should consider adding legumes to their diet. Lentils, beans, and peas improve the soil, reduce risks of cardiac disease, diabetes, and cancer, and are vastly less expensive to produce—and to buy. There is no constitutionally guaranteed right to eat animals cheaply. The entire populace must not subsidize such individual lifestyle choices.

Sincerely,

Carol Moore