

Submitter: Jane Marsh

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

I am an Oregonian writing in support of the Factory Farm Moratorium. Factory farms negatively impact the health of our waterways and aquatic life and our domestic wells; create air pollution; and have little concern for animal welfare. Factory farms are not good for our state, regardless of the tax revenue they generate. I'd rather our state promote/incentivize small operations that use proven sustainable practices than continue to kowtow to large livestock industry players. We need stronger regulations and laws for these industries...and strong oversight and enforcement. The status quo is not working.

It is time to acknowledge that animal waste/runoff is a key factor driving Oregon's degraded water and waterways. Oregon has more than 120,000 miles of polluted/impaired rivers and streams – the most nationwide! (Environmental Integrity Project. <https://environmentalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWA@50-report-3-17-22.pdf>) What's worse, 80% of those rivers and streams threaten aquatic life - Oregon is the worst in this category. Oregon has over 17,619 miles of rivers and streams designated as unsafe for swimming and water contact recreation, #2 worst in the nation behind Indiana!

We know that the tons of waste coming out of CAFOs contaminate our groundwater, rivers and streams. These operations also use large amounts of water. The overdrawing from aquifers impacts domestic water wells, which already struggle with impacts from drought. In addition, CAFOs are responsible for toxic air pollutants and methane. Regarding environmental justice concerns: I would like to see a map of CAFOs overlaid on a map of communities according to average income. Finally, but not lastly, CAFOs violate all tenets of animal welfare.

I would argue the "mega" definition of 2550+ should be lowered to at least the median size of an Oregon dairy operation of 270 head. (The same idea might be considered for a moratorium for any other animal operations under consideration). There are about 10-12 dairy operations or 5% of the 200 Grade A dairy farms in Oregon licensed for 2500+ head. A dairy is considered "large" in Oregon at 700 head. Furthermore, the EPA defines a large CAFO as one that has 1000+ head. In its deliberations, I hope that the Committee considers setting the moratorium lower, and closer to 500 head or even to the average size of 270 head.

Over the years, large CAFO operations have crowded out many smaller scale dairies. I personally support small Oregon creameries that get their milk from their own small dairy operations or from small dairies. I refuse to buy dairy from mega

producers that use milk from mega dairies. We must protect our last independent family-scale farmers and new emerging small-scale and truly sustainable farmers from the harms of mega-scale corporate factory farms. We can bolster any market based on our values!

I have also learned that factory chicken operations from other states want to move into the Willamette Valley. Bill Mattos, the head of the California Poultry Association, asserts that Oregonians want these poultry operations because we desire to “eat local.” We may want to “eat local,” but there’s “local” and then there’s a mega factory farm that happens to be “local” in one’s zip code. I’d argue these are not the same thing. Plus, he argues, poultry farms produce “dry waste” that is somehow less problematic than cow (or hog) manure. Science tells us that nothing could be further from the truth! We need to fight to keep these mega farms and mega corps out of our state because they do so much more harm than good.

Regarding the welfare of the poor cow, chicken, hog – whatever the poor creature that is confined and living an unnatural life with zero dignity in these CAFOs...I want my state to play a bigger role in mitigating the harms these creatures endure from these operations. Please take this issue into consideration as you study these issues and ponder these new regulations.

Thank you.