

March 6, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources

From: Mary A Forman
Forman Ranch, Inc.

Re: SB 85

This Bill is unnecessary and unfair to those that operate responsibly and ethically. The amendment proposes to arbitrarily prohibit the Oregon Department of Agriculture from issuing Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permits to operations that have over a certain number of animals. However, based on the testimony from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the Oregon Water Resources Department to this very Committee, it was demonstrated that our state has one of the strongest CAFO programs in the country and protective of Oregon's environment.

Moreover, SB 85 (-1) would prohibit the ODA and DEQ from issuing CAFO permits to Tier II CAFOs, even if it is a Tier II CAFO with a record of complying with Oregon's environmental laws. For us that means when any of the existing CAFOs need a permit renewal (typically every 5-years), they would be required to lay-off employees (including UFW employees), sell animals, and financially may even be required to sell our Oregon facilities and instead expand in our neighboring states. This cannot be the result the legislature is intending with this bill.

There is a concerning trend emerging where legislation seeks to pit so-called "family farms" against other types of operations, namely "industrial" CAFOs that are depicted as cold, faceless businesses. This is a false narrative. We are a family-owned business that would be impacted by SB 85. Nothing about our ranch operation is industrial. The people who own or work at farms and ranches across Oregon are family members who are dedicated to the land and to providing the utmost care for the well-being of the animals.

It seems that every legislative session, special interest groups make statements to use a farm's size as a proxy for determining whether that farm is a responsible actor to its employees, animals, and the environment. Farm size is NOT a determining factor of a farm's ethic.

Please do not allow this bill any further time or advancement. It is a very bad idea.