

Submitter: Kit Johnston

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod and Members of Senate Committee on Natural Resources,

I am submitting testimony today in strong opposition to SB 85, including the -1 amendment which will negatively impact the entirety of our state. I am a 5th generation Oregon farmer and a newly elected Yamhill County Commissioner. My family ran a large scale poultry farm in Dayton for 25 years, growing for Pederson Fryer Farms, Draper Valley Farms, Pacific Foods, and Foster Farms. I have extensive knowledge of growing chickens under a CAFO permit. Denying permits at any level, for any length of time will have severe consequences from which our state will be hard pressed to ever recover.

The agricultural practices in Oregon are highly regulated in ways that serve to protect our natural resources. This in itself is a reason why we need our food to be grown right here, in our home state of Oregon. Not across borders and not overseas. Putting a moratorium on Oregon CAFO permits is closing a door on opportunities for our farmers to continue growing food for Oregonians. When that door closes, you can rest assured the door will open elsewhere.

If this passes, we will see the decimation of our livestock industry in Oregon. Food prices for everyone will increase and what is left of locally grown food such as chicken will be available at prices reserved only for the wealthy. This bill is inequitable and based on false narratives being spread about large scale chicken farming by people who have never set foot on a poultry farm.

I urge you to please oppose SB 85, including the -1 amendment. Please speak to the farmers like myself, learn about their practices and the amount of food they produce for Oregonians, and the care they have for our land and natural resources. The only way to ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of income, can continue to buy healthy, locally grown food is to allow our farmers to do their job and farm!

Thank you for your time,
Kit Johnston

Farmer
Yamhill County Commissioner