

Submitter: Jeffrey Carman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Dear State Senators,

In regard to SB-85 I am in support of a moratorium on all new concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Oregon. As a matter of public health, it is clear that there are no benefits to CAFOs and the consequences of new CAFOs, under the current technological and regulatory framework. At the moment large multinational companies are promoting their growth in market share by spreading the use of these CAFOs at the expense of local public health. The drawback to CAFOs are myriad, but the most pressing are the costs to public health and ecological health. Many of us remember the 2018 algal bloom that rendered the water supply to Oregon's second-largest city undrinkable for days. The proliferation of nitrate pollution in waterways means that algal blooms will be larger and more frequent if no proactive steps are taken to prevent nitrate pollution. Algal blooms also are very bad for the ecological health of the area, leading to large aquatic animal die-offs and a deadly water supply for wildlife.

A CAFO produces an amount of animal waste that is impossible for the farm itself or even the surrounding farms to absorb, manage, or contain. The extreme concentration of animal waste generated by CAFOs also presents not only an odorous nuisance to the public but also the toxic gases and particulate matter produced affect the health of workers in the CAFOs and citizens living nearby. In addition to the immediate health threats, CAFOs contribute greenhouse gas emissions far beyond what a standard farm operation of the same physical footprint would produce.

In addition to the animal waste problem, it has been well-documented that CAFOs contribute significantly to the proliferation of antibiotic-resistant strains of common bacteria. Each year more than 2.8 million people develop infections from antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria each year, killing 35,000 people annually.

While I strongly support this bill I also must acknowledge that HB-85 is not the end of this question for Oregonians, instead, this bill is a substantial first step toward making Oregon a place that is proactive with regulations. We need additional regulations that will protect the public health and the public good, over the interests of out-of-state multinational corporations.

Best regards,

Jeffrey Carman, MPH, REHS