

Submitter: Adriana Voss-Andreae

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Dear Chair Golden, Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Dr. Adriana Voss-Andreae, and I'm an Oregonian living in Senate District 21,

As a physician-scientist with a background in public health, I was prepared last week to provide you a testimony summarizing the ample data, numbers and statistics that demonstrate just how toxic and harmful industrial-scale farms are to the health of Oregonians.

But after hearing the impassioned testimony that came before me, I am emphasizing something else: compassion.

I want to voice my compassion for farmers, including those opposing this bill- I heard many of them state that they felt pressure to get big or else risk losing their only livelihood. Our current food system forces farmers to either compete with, or else be controlled by, big corporate interests.

I have compassion for the farmers from Scio and Stayton and other places who face being the neighbors of these industrial-scale operations, with all their toxic pollutants and extreme water use that threaten not only their own livelihoods as farmers, but also the health of their families, their children.

I have compassion for the workers at many of these industrial facilities, who are often from the most vulnerable populations, because of the low pay and high risk for injuries.

I have compassion for the animals who are treated more like inanimate commodities than as the] sentient beings that they are, who -like us- don't want to be mutilated and suffer in dark, overcrowded warehouses so packed that they can barely move, bathed in their own feces for months until they're transported to be hung upside down on massive conveyer belts that plunge them into electrified water.

So why do we allow our food system to be dictated by federal policy and subsidies that favor the highly concentrated wealth and power of a handful of corporations that extract most of the profit, leaving our farmers and communities high and dry?

Why do we allow these giant corporations to externalize the immeasurable costs of

exploiting, extracting and polluting our soil, air, water, food supply chain, climate, farmers, farmworkers, animals, biodiversity, communities and the very systems that sustain life on Earth? It's a system that pits farmer against farmer and neighbor against neighbor- all to extract ever more profit for a few corporations and plutocratic Wall street investors.

Do you know who I don't have much compassion for? The likes of Foster Farms, which is not only not a "family farm", it's in fact not a farm at all- Foster Farms was bought up by Atlas Holdings, it's part of a multi-billion dollar private equity firm. It's beholden first and foremost to its investors, not to farmers or anyone else.

I urge you to pass SB85 and place an immediate moratorium on the expansion of industrial-scale farms and instead explore policies that prioritize and incentivize the health and livelihoods of Oregon's farmers and communities above the profits of a few.

I urge you to join me in compassion; I urge you to join me in supporting SB 85.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter,

Adriana Voss-Andreae, MD PhD
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