

Submitter: Kate Siepert

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Date: 3/14/23

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee

From: Kate Siepert

Re: Support for SB 85- the factory farm moratorium bill

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

My name is Kate Siepert, and I live in Eugene, Oregon.

I am writing to you today in support of a factory farm moratorium in Oregon. We must take action to halt the expansion of factory farming in our state until we have protections in place for the environment, animal welfare, family farms, and frontline communities.

All Oregonians have a right to clean air, water, and food. Industrialized farming techniques have been proven to be harmful to land, animals, and people through the use of monocrops that require high levels of pesticide usage causing high levels of drain-off and increased contamination of our foods as well as our environment. In addition, large factory farming techniques - such as feeding ruminants on corn and soy rather than the grasses they have evolved to ingest, and housing animals in tightly packed quarters that lead to increased need for antibiotics that then make their way into the bodies of consumers and have led to ever-increasing numbers of "super-bugs" - have been proven to have direct ill-health results for our citizens, leading to increased levels of autoimmune and metabolic disease, as well as increased numbers of infectious disease that do not respond to antibiotics. This leads to very real and difficult suffering in the lives of Oregonians. In my work as a chaplain at the local hospital, I see untold numbers of patients who are living with the consequences of eating foods produced through large factory methods. The suffering that plays out in the daily lives of our Oregon families is devastating, and we have a moral responsibility to think critically and act decisively to right these wrongs. Investing in small farms and enacting a moratorium on large industrial scale farms is one step in the right direction to righting this harm.

Instead, join in envisioning Oregon as a place where small family farms are a backbone to our economic and food security strategy, enhancing rural economic stability and providing the basis for thriving and vibrant communities. Oregonians know that a healthy food system is integral to the wellbeing of individuals, communities, our agriculture, and our state. Instead of paving the way for large corporate enterprise, invest in access to healthy, happy, and sustainable locally grown agricultural products, sources that are raised in ethical and humane ways. Large scale farming cannot support these growing cycles and are incentivised to follow inhumane and unsustainable practices in order to increase their bottom line, exacting a toll that we all then pay through our own ill health, the increasing dangers of global warming, and the imbalance of our resources going to fund large agriculture rather than investing in the future of our state and the livelihoods of local citizen farmers.

I urge you to vote for SB 85 in the 2023 Legislative Session to protect our small and midsized socially and ecologically responsible family farms in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Kate Siepert

Chaplain Associate

PeaceHealth RiverBend