

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod and members of the committee.

My name is Dr. Catherine Thomasson and I am speaking on behalf of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

I want to thank you for writing this bill. I am strongly in support for the -1 amendment. This is not about a moratorium. It is about the serious health impacts of factory farms.

I have taken care of people with asthma. It is painful to watch someone struggling for air or dying from it and being helpless to change that outcome. The workers in chicken factories get asthma symptoms and have to work in environments with high ammonia, along with particulates increasing risks of heart attacks and strokes.

We all need oxygen to fuel our brains but especially our children. Nitrate levels in the groundwater are still elevated around the now Easterday Farm with no cows, previously known as Lost Valley Ranch. Permitting a mega dairy along with another 8000 beef cattle on this land is unconscionable, yet our agencies cannot stop the farm from moving forward. When I met the Easterday family before the head of the family was imprisoned for billing Tyson corporation for cows they didn't have, they tried to explain to me how they would use the manure to spread on the land as a fertilizer/ground amendment. I was concerned that the volume would be too great especially in winter and would indeed still leach nitrate into the groundwater—just as they have already.

I understand what pushed Mr. Easterday to defraud Tyson Foods, and that is the inability of ranchers and chicken farmers to get adequate payment for raising animals humanely. That is why these CAFO's are running small farmers out of business which is wrong on so many levels. They are the major cause of pollution in rural areas and large users of water for which they are not held adequately responsible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Catherine Thomasson, MD