

March 22, 2023

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

I am submitting testimony **in support SB85 with the -1 amendments**. I own a home and small orchard in Scio and am particularly concerned with an influx of extremely large poultry CAFO proposals in rural Linn and Marion counties. These proposals have revealed gaps in laws and regulations that currently fail to protect our natural resources, environment, human health, and community from impacts of industrial chicken grow-out facilities.

The proposed SB85 -3 amendments are inadequate for the following reasons:

1) SB85-3 proposes an extremely tight timeline.

The issues and concerns identified in public testimony and in the legislative working group are serious and complex and can't be studied or addressed in 18 or 24 months with only 6 months for legislative work! Agency personnel and legislators have many issues on their plates, and 2 years is simply not enough time.

A CAFO permit lasts 10 years. Eight years is an appropriate pause to allow serious examination of information and data and to accommodate the work necessary for legislative updates. SB85-1 proposes that a report be issued in December of 2024 and 2026, allowing the legislature to have some say on needed information prior to a final report. It then allows enough time for a robust legislative process.

2) SB85 – 3 appears to urge or suggest limiting the scope of study to water supply and air quality at adjacent or nearby properties, and possibly waste disposal.

SB85-1 identifies a broader list of areas of concern, including water quality as well as quantity, air quality not limited to adjacent properties, effects on smaller farms, communities, worker health, animal welfare, and climate impacts.

We should be willing to examine all issues and collect data for analysis. Narrowing the scope of study through proposed SB85-3 simply mirrors the issue of having narrowly written regulations that leave our communities, natural resources, and environment unprotected.

While Oregon regulatory agencies are a vital part of the process, I think that the proposed CAFO study and analysis should be conducted by a contracted firm with experience and expertise in environmental analysis and land use planning, rather than by state regulatory agencies themselves. This would ensure impartiality and lessen placement of additional duties on already overburdened agency staff.

3) SB85-3 addresses only poultry CAFOs.

While Cattle and Poultry are certainly different, they are addressed in the same sections of State Statute and regulations, that are best revisited as a whole. These Statutes and regulations have not been comprehensively and seriously revisited in decades.

Times have changed. CAFOs have changed. And our laws are overdue for periodic maintenance.

A cynical person might think that SB85-3's tight timeline, minimized scope of study, and limit to poultry CAFOs betray a wish to sweep this issue away without serious study or opportunity to legislate.

SB85-1 will not affect existing, operating CAFOs. It does not take away anybody's livelihood. Our food prices will not skyrocket. The supply chain will not collapse.

SB85-1 has the support of small and large farmers alike, and both rural and urban Oregonians. I urge you to pass SB85-1 out of your committee.

Thank you for your hard work and for consideration of my comments.

Respectfully,

Margaret Spahn