

April 28, 2023

**Testimony in Favor of HB 2907 & HB 2194**

**Joint Committee on Ways and Means**

Co-chairs, Vice-chairs, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for traveling to The East side of Oregon and holding this Hearing. My name is Curtis W. Martin, North Powder, Oregon.

My testimony today centers around two Bills. First is House Bill 2907, which appropriates 10 million dollars to further increase the realization of Oregon's Meat Processing expansion, plus it reaffirms the purpose of Oregon's Meat Processing Inspection Program, administered by Oregon Department of Agriculture, reinstated, and authorized in the last legislative session. This funding will allow for continuing the program, initiated in 2021, which had \$14 million in requests, but only \$2 million in appropriation. This fact totally indicates the need for assisting further meat processing capacity. The area of Eastern Oregon has thousands of finished cattle, that have to be transported 100's of miles to out of state facilities for processing. This makes no sense in any way! The societal wide benefits range from increasing the farm gate value to Oregon Beef Producers, rejuvenating rural economies by increasing business opportunities with Family wage salaries, locally sourced, higher quality meat, strengthening of the food supply chain, with consistently lower cost to the consumer. Less transportation expense also benefits the environment and will hold down retail prices. House Bill 2907 needs this level of investment to fulfill the mission.

House Bill 2194 is another key component tied directly into Processing expansion. The 4 million dollar appropriation is specifically directed toward management of meat processing waste. This is the main economic hindrance for existing, or start-up facilities, to grow, or even maintain current levels of processing. It ranges from \$35 to \$55 per head for management of the waste from each carcass. There are existing and developing technologies that can actually take this waste, process it through new generation bio-digesters, that are both aerobic and anaerobic, and create a positive economic return, instead of a deficit on the P/L statement. These Bio-digesters alleviate environmental concerns and complications by eliminating the need for certified landfill sites, and by fully enclosed composting with minimal time lapse, while producing valuable, nutrient dense organic soil amendments, and again creates employment by exiting from a nuisance cost, into a financially beneficial product. The anaerobic model, for higher capacity situations, produces captured methane, butane and propane for self-contained energy generation. Additionally, this process captures all green house gas, so this is carbon capture positive!

Closing my statement, I am sincerely asking that your committee fully fund these two investments that will certainly, without a doubt, have positive payback economically, to the environment, and in building Oregon's food security supply chain.

Sincerely,

Curtis W. Martin