

Submitter: Linda Duman
On Behalf Of: Lourdes Public Charter School
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SB85

I am in support of SB 85. Something needs to be done to protect our communities. Our county commissioners have told us they have no control over what can be done in our county because ODA trumps them. We have elected officials that are unable to do their job? Something needs to change.

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 4.6 million chicken/year Evergreen Ranch CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) that will operate less than one-half mile from our public school, church, and community center. As administrator of the only onsite school of choice in our district, I feel compelled to preserve a highly successful school with a 125 years history. This area is a strong, distinctive, centurion community, marked by a legacy of successful stewardship of natural resources, reflected in the widespread practice of low-impact agriculture. This situation is gravely threatened by the proposed large poultry CAFO. In viewing this situation, I am forced to ask "What is the intent of the 1960's right-to-farm laws?" Is it not to protect existing, established farms by limiting urban spread? The areas now fighting the proposed mega poultry farms in Linn County are trying to protect their centurion agricultural communities.

Multiple studies have shown that poultry CAFOs, even those smaller than Evergreen Ranch, have drastic and deleterious effects on the environment and human health. Nitrogen wastes, including ammonia and uric acid, foul the air and seep into the ground water. Infectious bacteria also contaminate the air and groundwater supplies. Mammals change their waste ammonia (NH₃) to urea while poultry change NH₃ to uric acid. This contributes to the situation in which poultry waste, pound for pound, contains 2-4 times the nitrogen and phosphorus of mammalian waste, both of which contribute to damage of soil and water. This is dramatically reflected in the extensive 'dead zones' in the Chesapeake Bay, where runoff from poultry CAFOs is a key contributor to algal blooms that deplete oxygen and kill marine life. Are our waters to suffer a similar fate?

The barns on the Evergreen Ranch are located less than 300 feet from Thomas Creek. These barns are on a field that is tilled into a reservoir that drains directly into Thomas Creek, which ultimately drains into the Willamette.

Please do something to protect the rights of rural Oregonians in communities like ours.