

Submitter: Beth Gates  
On Behalf Of: Slow Food Portland  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure: SB85

Dear Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

My name is Beth Gates, and I live in Portland, Oregon.

I am writing to you today in support of large factory farm reform in Oregon. Although I would prefer that SB 85-1 was passed to give ample time for responsible policy direction, I want to voice my support for SB 85-4 as a start to addressing some of the most immediate impacts of the influx of factory farms we are seeing in our state. We must take action to halt the expansion of large factory farming in our state until we have protections in place for the environment, animal welfare, family farms, and frontline communities. But we must also keep working on the current proposal to make sure it does not put a new burden on small farmers for the sake of allowing large CAFOs to produce more waste than they can handle.

As a concerned citizen, and the Chair of the Slow Food Portland Board, I strongly support protecting Oregon's land and water resources, rural communities, and small farms from the destruction caused by the consolidation and proliferation of industrial agriculture. I am well aware of the negative impacts that large CAFOs (aka factory farms) have on small farms and rural communities.

All Oregonians have a right to clean air and water.

The documentation of air and water pollution as a direct result of large CAFOs is staggering. We need look no further than the communities of Morrow and Umatilla Counties which are facing a groundwater disaster from nitrate poisoning derived from factory farms. We need to make sure this does not happen to any other community in Oregon. This includes better groundwater monitoring and a way to revoke a permit if contamination is detected.

Oregon should be investing in small family farms that enhance rural economic stability and provide the basis for thriving and vibrant rural communities. A healthy LOCAL food system is integral to the wellbeing of our communities, our agriculture, and our state. Large (mostly out of state) CAFO businesses are attempting to locate in areas of Oregon that are not suited to this type of industrial agriculture. Set backs from homes, schools, community gathering places and fish bearing streams are essential to keeping our rural communities healthy and vital.

Oregonians want community-based agriculture that delivers safe food to all

Oregonians.

Small and mid-sized farms are essential to the health and well being of:

- Farmers and farmer workers, and their communities.
- Animals being farmed.
- People who eat the food raised on these farms.
- Our environment, wild animals and water.

I urge you to continue to work with Friends of Family Farmers and their coalition members to craft strong regulation for the largest CAFOs in the 2023 Legislative Session to protect our small and mid-sized socially and ecologically responsible family farms in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Beth Gates, Chair of the Board  
Slow Food Portland