

Submitter: Brandon Schilling

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2164

Dear Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Wildfire:

My name is Brandon and I am a farmer, rancher, local food system advocate, and president of the Clatskanie Farmer Collective . I am writing today to support HB 2164 and tell you how crucial it is that we take the final steps to make the State Meat Inspection program successful. It is crucial that Oregon have the infrastructure to enable our hardworking farmers and ranchers to bring their livestock to market. The state currently has too few USDA inspected facilities to meet demand and small farms are often given 12 month wait times for appointments to get their animals processed. The State Meat Inspection Program can alleviate this bottleneck and allow more farms to thrive here, reduce their travel and processing costs, and allow small farms to meet the growing demand for local pasture raised meat.

This personally impacts me because I work with multiple producers to bring animal products to our year-round retail establishment and our seasonal outdoor farmers market. All of these producers not only struggle to maintain their profit margins due to obstacles surrounding processing (ie travel time, travel expense, constrictive scheduling, etc.), but also have the impossible task of booking processing dates for animals that are often not even born yet. These obstacles have continued to negatively impact their operations, and keep prices for consumers unreasonable high. Animal products are an incredibly nutrient dense food, and when raised in appropriate regenerative conditions, enhance our local and state resources of land, water, and air. If we were to increase support for this industry, we would effectively be supporting massive carbon sequestration while reducing the emissions required currently to get animal products to market.

The time is NOW to start listening to your constituents, not large corporations who have historically abused our local and state resources and the communities in which they operate. Supporting local, small farms is the solution to so many "crises" facing humanity, specifically energy, climate, and health. Please support the people who are willing to do the appropriate work, and simply require the community support that you are positioned to bolster.

Thank you,

Brandon Schilling

President, The Clatskanie Farmer Collective
owner, The Wild Locals food & farm