

January, 23, 2025

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

My name is Beth Gates and I am a community member from Portland. 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 impacts me personally because I only buy local pasture raised meat from small livestock farmers. Local pasture raised meat is the best for the environment and for the animals. I know many small livestock producers who struggle to find access to inspected processing facilities, and I have had heard stories from these farmers that they get bumped from facilities when larger livestock producers need more processing. These small farmers offer high quality products and contribute to our state economy, they need access to processing facilities in order to stay in business.

The state has already devoted so many resources and staff hours to the establishment of the State Meat Inspection Program and qualifying facilities. Do not let the program fail to meet its promises because of a lack of inspector capacity.

Please support HB 2164 and fulfill the promises our state has made to its local livestock producers.

Thank you,

Beth Gates

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