



February 18, 2025

RE: Testimony in support of SB 1019

Submitted by Jeff Wendler, D.V.M
General Manager of Livestock Operations
Threemile Canyon Farms

Chair Golden and Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources:

For more than 25 years, Threemile Canyon Farms has responsibly provided for a growing population of people who care about where their food comes from. While we are proud of our contributions, we know that what sets us apart isn't just what we do, but how we do it. We were early innovators in building a "closed-loop" system of sustainable farming. The circular agriculture system we champion is made possible by bringing together crop farming and dairy production. These are highly complementary pursuits when done with care.

We choose to farm our land this way because we are deeply committed to being stewards of a healthy environment, caring for our animals and enriching our community. Since our founding in 1999, Threemile has routinely gone beyond regulatory environmental requirements and exceeded established standards. Beyond the high standards we maintain for ourselves, we have also received accolades from sustainability organizations and high scores from independent auditors related to the well-being of our animals. We were the first dairy to score 100 from Validus, an independent animal welfare auditor, and we have done so twice.

We are also deeply committed to the welfare of the dairy industry and the entire agricultural community. We support SB 1019 because it recognizes a pragmatic approach to the state's brand program. As part of his due diligence, Senator Todd Nash reached out to dairy farmers to discuss this program. We appreciate his efforts and interest in striking a balance between dairy, cattle, and feedlot owners.

We understand the legislature may consider other approaches to funding the brand inspection program and we support those conversations. However, it is important to Threemile that any proposal better connect the fee paid with the service provided. Today, there are large inequities in the fee structure requiring dairies like Threemile to pay significantly more for the program than they receive in service because the needs for inspection differ from ranches. Moving forward, the brand inspection program should reflect modern business practices and avoid cross subsidization in the program leaving some paying significantly more than the service they receive in return.

Thank you for your consideration.