

Submitter: Christine Psyk
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB80

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Committee Members:

I am writing to you in support of SB 80. We must take action to halt the expansion of factory farming, defined by the Oregon Department of Agriculture as large CAFOs, in our state's Groundwater Management Areas (GWMA) until contamination is brought down to safe levels.

Fertilizer use and manure pollutes groundwater with nitrates and threatens the health of those who drink it. Nitrate contamination in the Lower Umatilla Basin GWMA continues to get worse in spite of being designated a GWMA 35 years ago. We need mandatory reductions in pollution and to prevent new sources of pollution, including factory farms, from being built in GWMA in the first place.

Preventing any new or expansion of large CAFOs would prevent new sources of pollution into GWMA and give state regulatory agencies the time they need to address existing sources of pollution to bring them down to safe levels. We can no longer pretend that if things will get really bad and there's a crisis, the EPA will intervene. They won't. They are being diminished and unravelled. Oregon State elected officials need to step forward and do more to prevent pollution from contaminating our drinking water. Oregon can't just stand on the sidelines.

Factory farms fuel climate change by releasing harmful and dangerous greenhouse gas emissions such as methane and nitrous oxide. Large CAFOs rely on unsustainable agricultural practices which produce massive amounts of manure, along with significant methane, ammonia, and nitrous oxide emissions. Shifting to regenerative, sustainable practices would create a resilient food system that prioritizes the health of our environment and our communities.

I urge you to vote for SB 80 to protect our state's precious water resources! It's time we did the right thing.

Sincerely,
Christine Psyk
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