



Doulas Latinas International

Hermiston, Umatilla County, OR

04/02/2025

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

I am writing to you today in support of SB 80. Doulas Latinas International is a non-profit organization that partners with others to form the Alliance for Childbearing & Collective Health Equity to reduce inequities that are harming the health of American babies and their mothers, elevating the rates of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. Our mission is to educate and offer perinatal services with vulnerable populations of Oregon, including immigrants and refugees' farmworkers. Those populations are mostly directly affected by environmental climate changes and water contamination.

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 (GWMAs) 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 despite being designated a GWMA 35 years ago. Levels of nitrate over 10mg are consistently found in that area, with extremes of 40mg or 50mg, extremely harmful to any living body in such conditions, let alone to pregnant people and their babies. We need mandatory reductions in pollution and to prevent new sources of pollution, including factory farms, from being built in GWMAs in the first place. Preventing any new or expanding large CAFOs would prevent new sources of pollution in GWMAs which would give state regulatory agencies the time they need to address existing sources of pollution.

Relying on intervention from the federal EPA to address this crisis might no be the solution any longer. Oregon elected officials need to act proactively to prevent pollution from contaminating our drinking water. 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 and 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!

Sincerely,

Sandra H. Hernandez, Ph.D., M.Ed

Executive & Programs Director

Doulas Latinas International

Alliance for Childbearing & Collective Health Equity

Umatilla, Morrow, Multnomah, Hood River, Wasco, Marion, Yamhill, Washington County