

Thursday, April 3rd, 2025

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee

From: Hannah Kersse

Re: Support for SB 80- to stop new or expanding large CAFOs in GWMA's

Dear Chair Golden, and Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee,

My name is **Hannah Kersse**, and I live in Portland, Oregon. Although the effects of CAFOs do not harm me in proximity, they harm me in other ways. CAFOs pollute the air and water *and* abuse thousands of animals. The state should have a duty to protect its citizens by protecting our human environment. I am 26. Climate change effects are here and are only worsening, negatively affecting me and my future. Pollution from these facilities is aggravating climate change. Stopping CAFOs is vital to slow the effects we are already witnessing.

I am writing to you today in **support of SB 80**. CAFOs are extremely perverse, dangerous operations. These operations detrimentally affect communities for a plethora of reasons, and this should be limited to the greatest extent practicable. Thus, passing SB 60 is absolutely essential. 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 until the contamination is decreased to safe levels.

My fellow rural Oregonians are harmed by the close proximity of CAFOs. Oregonians deserve better than inviting adverse **public health** impacts, especially because rural, poor communities (environmental justice) communities often bear the brunt of these harms but are already the most vulnerable. Drinking nitrate-laden water can cause severe health problems, particularly in women and infants, such as certain types of cancers, blue baby syndrome, thyroid issues, and other adverse health effects. Additionally, the large quantities of pollution concentrated on factory farms release airborne particulate matter linked to asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory diseases — nationwide, factory farm air pollution is responsible for [more than 12,000 premature deaths every year](#). Nitrate from fertilizers and manure pollutes groundwater and threatens the health of those who drink it. Nitrate contamination in the LUBGWMA continues to worsen despite 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's in the first place.

CAFOs are destroying the **environment**. Factory farms fuel climate change by releasing harmful and dangerous greenhouse gas emissions such as methane and nitrous oxide. One ton of manure from large dairy farms produces more than twice as many greenhouse gas emissions as one ton of manure from small dairy farms due to manure management practices. Large CAFOs rely on unsustainable agricultural practices that 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 communities. Additionally, factory farms externalize costs and force taxpayers to take on the burden of pollution clean-up and the cost of healthcare due to contaminated water.

Lastly, CAFOs do not support **workers**. Sure, they provide jobs, but the jobs they provide are

jobs no human wants to work, and many people who are are subjected to terrible working conditions, long hours with low pay, and often develop adverse health impacts, including impacts to their mental health. Factory farms force workers into unsafe working conditions. Workers are often subjected to dangerous working conditions and exposed to hazardous chemicals, fumes, and particulate matter. Investing time and energy into small and mid-sized family farms is essential to protect and uplift Oregon workers. Factory farms concentrate profits on large corporations, driving small to mid-sized farms out of business by consolidating land and resources by reducing competition.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider passing SB 80. I care about protecting my community, and this is an exceptional opportunity to protect so many facets of Oregonians' lives all at once.