



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 197**

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SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee:

- I'm testifying today in support of SB 197, the bill to control air pollution from factory dairy farms. The bill was prompted in part by the proposed construction of a massive, 30,000-cow factory dairy farm in northeastern Oregon, a region of the state already home to Threemile Canyon Farms, which houses tens of thousands of dairy and beef cattle. Along with establishing important standards for the air pollution from dairy farms, the bill also presents us with an opportunity to ask ourselves important questions about the future of industrial animal agriculture in Oregon.
- As we sit here, residents of Yakima, Washington are warned not to drink their well water due to flooding by manure-laden waters from a massive nearby dairy farm. According to the advocacy group Public Justice, rather than work to address and prevent future disasters, the state representative who represents this area is sponsoring legislation to provide industrial dairy farms with fewer pollution rules, not more, putting his constituents at risk of widespread contamination and disease.
- In other states, Big Ag and its allies in state legislatures are seizing on the advantage at the federal level and actually working to reduce and/or eliminate regulation of factory farms and shield them from undercover investigations,

public reporting requirements, and nuisance suits by neighbors downwind and downstream.

- Here in Oregon, we are at a crossroads. We can take the path that ends with the loss of our family-owned farmlands and greenspaces to factory farming corporations, or we can choose instead to protect our environment, support family farms, and raise food animals with decency and respect. Industrial agribusiness will be working to locate as many factory farms as possible on or near the west coast to reduce shipping and other costs and exploit the Asian markets for cheap, factory farm-raised milk, pork, and beef. Will we allow those entities, almost all of which will be out-of-state and foreign companies, to dictate what happens to our environment and our communities?
- Large CAFOs put too many animals on the land (CAFO stands for Confined Animal Feeding Operation), creating manure management problems from the manure of dairy cows confined year-round, requiring large storage lagoons holding massive amounts of liquefied waste. These open-air lagoons are a major source of air contamination for surrounding areas by methane, ammonia, and other noxious gases.
- Allowing animals to be outside on pasture is both more humane and better for air quality. The Humane Society of the United States supports animal agriculture that provides food animals with access to sunshine, grass, and the opportunity to interact normally with others of their own kind. The factory farm model largely deprives food animals of those basic needs.
- An air quality program for dairy operations should encourage best management practices like grazing on pasture, rather than year-round confinement. Oregon should be assisting farmers in getting cows onto pasture as much of the year as possible, not encouraging year-round confinement through lax environmental oversight.
- Rather than giving factory farming the green light by making it easier to build and operate large industrial CAFOs in our state, Oregon's leaders, and the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture, should adopt policies that support independent farmers who are good to their animals, their land, and their neighbors. Passing SB 197 is an important first step. Please vote yes.
- Thank you!