



**Oregon Dairy Farmers Association  
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## HB 2859 TESTIMONY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON REVENUE  
REPRESENTATIVE PHIL BARNHART, CHAIR

March 1, 2017

Presented by  
Tammy Dennee, CMP, CAE – Legislative Director  
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association

My name is Tammy Dennee. I am the Legislative Director for the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association headquartered here in Salem, representing 228 Oregon Dairies statewide. These multi generational farm families deliver the highest quality milk to the market everyday **under strict federal regulations**. In 2015, the milk produced on their farms resulted in an economic contribution of more than \$474 million dollars. The number of Oregon Dairies is directly related to the ability of each farm to withstand milk market price fluctuation against the cost of feed, labor, taxes, equipment and much more. It is imperative any adjustments in existing laws, including taxes, passed by the Legislature are carefully considered so as to offer protection where needed and to avoid placing dairy farm families in harm's way.

The Oregon Dairy Farmers Association respectfully opposes **the elements of HB 2859 that affect the existing tax structure specific to agriculture and natural resource entities**.

Succession of the family farm is predicated on existing tax structure as well as existing land use laws. Many, if not all, of our Oregon Dairy Farmers have planned their estates and structured their businesses with existing tax code as their framework. A major shift in the tax codes that have provided a sense of confidence to current operators and their future generations could, in fact, cause the next generation to simply choose to abandon the farming operation altogether. The dairy farmer is unlike any other producer, as they are on the clock 365 days per year on a 24 hour/seven day a week schedule. This profession does not provide for days off for illness or frivolous vacation. A single day away from the farm operation is a very serious decision.

**The Oregon Dairy Farmers Association respectfully urges the Committee to amend HB 2859 to eliminate all direct and indirect references to agriculture that result in increased taxes to family farmers.**