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June 22, 2020

Chair Senator Peter Courtney  
Chair Representative Tina Kotek  
Joint Interim Committee on the First Special Session of 2020  
State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
*Sent via electronic mail to [j1ss.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:j1ss.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)*

***Re: Support for LC 74 – State Inspection Program for Meat Product Processing and Sales***

Dear Chairs Courtney and Kotek and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on LC 74. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit membership organization that has worked with Oregonians for more than 40 years to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests, and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

By passing LC 74, the legislature would be taking a right step forward to address the current shortage of meat processing plants in Oregon staffed by federal meat inspectors. If the Department of Agriculture was granted authority, and rules were established, to allow for a state meat inspection program that mirrored the federal program, more opportunities for meat processing in Oregon could occur. Oregon would join 27 other states in the nation that have taken advantage of the state meat processing and inspection program.

COVID-19 impacts to the supply chain have demonstrated how vulnerable food systems are, and the importance of having sufficient processing facilities within the state. I am aware of at least one producer that had a reservation at a meat processing facility revoked due to COVID-19. Passage of LC 74 would help put the state on the right path to address the need for more processing facilities. Yet even if this concept becomes law, significant work still needs to occur to address the need, including the establishment of long-term funding streams for the inspection program.

Thank you,  
Scott Hilgenberg  
Rural Lands Legislative Attorney