

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm adding my support for HB 2612, support for raw butter. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has a database tracking foodborne illness outbreaks from 1998 to 2016. During that time there has not been a single foodborne illness outbreak attributed to the consumption of commercially produced raw butter. Neither have there been any foodborne illness outbreaks linked to raw butter consumption since 2016. The sale and or distribution of raw butter is currently legal in 11 other states including California where one dairy Raw Farm (formerly Organic Pastures Dairy Company) has sold over 2 million pounds of raw butter over the past 20 years without incident.

With the passage of HB 2612 it would better enable dairy farmers to make a living and could help stem the decline in the number of Oregon dairy farms. In 1992 Oregon had 1,900 farms with dairy cows according to USDA data. The latest figures from the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association shows there are only 194 dairy farms left in the state. I'd like to see a return to the small dairy farmer rather than the large conglomerates. When anything gets too big the quality declines and with that so does our health on this topic in particular.

With consumer demand for locally produced foods like raw butter continues to grow. With the current ban on raw butter Oregon residents travel to California to purchase raw butter which costs the dairy industry revenue. Passage of HB 2612 would keep more of the food dollars within our great State. It would also benefit climate change as people would be traveling fewer distances to get what they want, fresh raw butter.

Thank you for your consideration.
Natasha Mulvihill