

February 2021

## TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 2785

Chair Witt and Members of the Committee:

My name is Suzanne King. I am a former food producer from North Plains, Oregon, currently living across the Columbia River in Camas, Washington — still eating in Oregon and advocating for improved food systems everywhere.

**Oregon — like the rest of the world — desperately needs LESS meat processing capacity, not more.** Our mistreatment and slaughter of other animals, which Dr. Anthony Fauci euphemizes as our “unusual human-animal interface,” is fundamentally related to why, according to the CDC, “3 out of every 4 new or emerging infectious diseases in people come from animals.” I understand that the legislature recently enacted the State Meat Inspection Program, but adding even *more* money to our “unusual human-animal interface” problem is short-sighted (at best).

I am asking you to **oppose HB 2785**, which would provide an additional \$10 million to **expand a problem**. A growing body of scientific research shows that eating plant-based diets not only promotes health, it requires less land, water, and chemical additives than resource-intensive animal-based agriculture.

Putting more money into a State Meat Inspection program is detrimental to the long-term health of our communities and our food system security.

Covid-19 has exposed an undeniable truth about meat and its processing — it is a risk that we pay for, but we do not need to keep paying for it. Processing facilities are breeding grounds for new pathogens, and the animal products themselves promote the diseases that are underlying conditions for greater risk of dying from Covid-19 (like obesity, coronary artery disease, and type 2 diabetes). Citizens’ tax dollars would be better spent by *helping farmers transition away from animal agriculture* altogether. I ask you to please oppose HB 2785 and look into the “At-Risk Farmer & Rancher Diversification & Transitioning Act” that is being discussed at the federal level. There are solutions that will help not only our farmers, but our communities’ health and our long-term ecological impact; **HB2785 is not that solution.**

Thank you,

Suzanne King  
Camas, WA (a current eater and former food producer in Oregon)

