

30 March 2021

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Re: Senate Bill 583

Dear Chair Senator Beyer, Vice-Chair Senator Findley, and members of the Committee:

By exploiting the ubiquitous and over-used *precautionary principal*, with little thought to the consequences of curtailing Oregon's dairy industry, Senate Bill 583 begins by stating that it's intentions and designs are in the best interests of Oregonians. I admire their ideological certainty but I disagree with their premise, and would remind them of the old saw concerning what the road to hell is allegedly paved with.

SB 583 is in the best interests of only those that believe their studies cannot be carried out while dairies continue to grow and Oregonians continue to prosper. Dairy farmers want to do what is right. But this bill would have the dairy industry just sit on its hands and wait while studies are being carried out. That is not in the best interests of Oregonians.

The Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council states dairy farms are located in 21 of Oregon's 36 counties. Milk is Oregon's fourth most valuable commodity after only cattle, greenhouse and nursery products and hay. In terms of agricultural exports, dairy products are Oregon's fifth most valuable commodity after seeds, fruits and nuts, wheat and vegetables.

Large scale farms in Oregon allow optimal use of scarce resources such as water, energy and land. They are increasingly working smarter with robotics, automated feeders, methane digesters, precision agriculture, solar panels and beneficial use of waste to increase efficiency and reduce impacts.

Sponsors of this bill do not represent any of Oregon's major dairy counties. Senator Riley's district 15, comes in at 4 percent* of state agriculture sales, which includes livestock, poultry, and products.

Senator Golden's District 3 brings in a whopping 25 percent, but that includes the entirety of Jackson County, far more than his district encompasses.

Senator Gelser's District 8, covering parts of Benton & Linn counties brings in, per county; Linn 25 percent and Benton 17 percent of Oregon's state agriculture sales, including livestock, poultry, and products.

Senator Dembrow's 13th District, ties with Senator Riley's, producing only 4 percent state agriculture sales, including livestock, poultry, and products. I would also like to mention that it was heavily populated Multnomah County, home of District 13, that in 2019 was the only county to pass HB 2015, the Equal Access to Roads Act, against Oregon's 35 other counties. That, and the fact that none of Oregon's ten largest dairies lies within any of the sponsor's districts illustrates the divide of urban areas dictating what is and isn't allowed in rural areas, as well as the state as a whole. Add the fact that SB 583 carries an emergency

clause, precluding the use of our initiative & referendum, also sheds light on the lopsided urban, rural divide we find in the state. This bill exacerbates that divide.

I urge the Committee to table this bill. Oregon taxpayers do not need to fund yet another study of what can already be discovered by past studies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Wisner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Wisner

* https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Oregon