



Representative Bobby Levy

Serving Umatilla, Union & Wallowa Counties

Chair Beyer and Co-Chair Findley:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of SB 583.

I proudly represent House District 58. It is no secret that agriculture is a critical industry in my district. From large farms to small hobby farms, agriculture is the life blood providing thousands of family-wage jobs, funding for local charities and revenue for schools, police and important public health services. That is why I am disappointed to see this bill being heard this session.

Like other legislators, I am here to solve real problems for real people. I am here to represent communities in my district, not attack other districts. I am here to do what is best for Oregon. SB 583 does not aim to solve real problems for real people. It was not designed or sponsored by legislators with large dairies in their district. SB 583 is not what is best for Oregon.

Instead, the bill creates an arbitrary distinction between dairy farms based on size, calling for a moratorium on dairies with more than 2,500 cows, regardless of the farmers values, compliance record, or value it brings to its community. In my experience, Oregon's dairy farmers of all sizes are good stewards of the land. They provide important jobs for communities that are often lacking employment opportunities. And I think we can all agree they produce some of the best milk and cheese on the planet. All while being good, responsible stewards of their animals and the environment.

It is time that we stop allowing hollow rhetoric to drive important policy discussions. It is time that we work together, using the best science and best facts to inform our policy dialogue. It is time that urban interests and rural interest work together to solve problems for the state.

I recognize this bill is dead for this session, but I hope that this will not be a concept used in the future to start serious dialogue on issues important to my district and rural Oregon.

Thank you,

Representative Bobby Levy, HD58