

I am a 3rd generation mink farmer. My grandfather started our family farm in 1936, and it has continued uninterrupted until this day. I also have a B.S. Degree in Bacteriology from the University of Idaho. Everyone has struggled through this pandemic, and farmers are no exception. I first learned that mink were possibly susceptible to COVID 19 in May of last year. In early June, I was contacted by Dr. Bill Barton, Idaho State Veterinarian and Dr. Leslie Tengelsen, Idaho State Public Health Veterinarian with biosecurity protocols developed by the USDA, APHIS, and CDC. I have been in communication with Dr. Barton several times since, as the protocols have been updated. Fortunately, we have been able to keep our herd disease free, in spite of there being a high infection rate among people in the greater Boise area. I firmly believe that, with regards to mink, this disease is entirely manageable, especially with a vaccine available soon. There is a minuscule risk to humans of infection from mink. I know of only one potential transference of COVID to humans from mink in the entire USA. I feel that SB 832 is a thinly veiled attempt to use the COVID pandemic as an excuse to abolish a legitimate segment of animal agriculture in Oregon. I urge you to reject SB 832. Thank you for your consideration.