

## Written Testimony: SB 85

TO: Chair Golden and Vice-Chair Girod and Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources  
FROM: Ron Bunch for Friends of Family Farmers and Farmers Against Foster Farms  
RE: Support of SB 85 – Moratorium on Approval of Tier 2 CAFOs  
Date: March 3, 2022

Oregon's current approach to siting Tier 2 CAFO's is inadequate to protect its communities and the natural environment. CAFO's have a role in providing important food resources. However, as currently allowed by the state, they also can have profound negative impacts on air, water, land resources and on human quality of life. Therefore, it is essential to pause approval of these land uses to allow time to develop appropriate siting and operating standards. The following are eight fundamental reasons why this is necessary.

### **The Way CAFOs are Currently sited in Oregon:**

**Annuls Participation in Decisions that Could Profoundly Impact Quality of Life:** In this circumstance people in rural and small communities do not have the right to meaningful notice and participation in governmental decision-making when industrial scale CAFOs are proposed. They face diminishment in their quality of life, health and property values without opportunity for recourse. The situation creates unnecessary social anxiety and conflict. Furthermore, it sets up an inequitable two-tier system. This is because people living in urban areas have the benefit of land use and environmental protections from industrial scale land uses and rural residents do not.

**Undermines Local Governments.** CAFO's can be sited anywhere on non-hazard agricultural land even adjacent to city limits and urban growth boundaries. It's not possible for local governments, residents and property owners to know where one or more will locate next. This prevents local officials from planning for and responding to concerns about CAFOs' impacts.

**Creates Stress on Local Public Services, Utilities and Transportation Systems.** Outside of special areas such as designated natural hazard areas and wetlands, CAFOS can be located wherever on agricultural lands and whenever one wishes. Consequently, local governments and utilities cannot plan for and manage their impacts on public facilities and services - transportation, waste management, surface water, emergency response systems and communication and energy utilities. For example, CAFOs because of their need for significant inputs, waste disposal and transport of animals, have major impacts on rural road systems, particularly usage by heavy trucks, which can damage local roads and bridges. Safety concerns are also an issue. Often rural counties cannot assess impact fees on these land uses necessary to mitigate their transportation system impacts.

**Conflicts with Traditional Soil Based Agriculture.** The dust, smell, air and water pollution, truck traffic and other impacts of CAFOS can conflict with other agricultural practices and devalue nearby properties. Building coverage and other site improvements results in loss of high value farmland.

**Undermines the Integrity of Natural, Cultural and Recreation Resources.** Nothing keeps CAFOs from being sited in rural areas adjacent to parks, scenic waterways, public open space areas, significant cultural and recreational areas, schools, churches, etc. The enjoyment of these special places and their community values can be adversely impacted.

**Creates Significant Air, Land, Water, and Waste Consequences.** CAFOS can be major air pollution sources through emissions of ammonia, methane, dust, hydrogen sulfide, etc. The huge amount of animal waste generated can degrade surface and groundwater and soils. This is bad for fish, wildlife and human health, and especially when made worse by reoccurring drought, watershed stress and when airsheds are prone to severe air quality problems.

**Increases the Consequences from Natural Disasters and Extreme Weather.** CAFO's are at high risk of major flooding, wildfires, disease and extreme weather because of the thousands of animals present in confined spaces. Risks includes events that could also interrupt food, water, energy, and other inputs necessary for animal welfare.

**Can Preempt other Economic Development Opportunities:** Industrial scale CAFOS may not be compatible with local government economic development plans especially when sited close to cities, in areas that have limited water or air quality resources and if their location and density undercuts established soil-based farming.