

Submitter: John Harrington

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Dear Senate Committee on Natural Resources,

I'm writing about the recent news of large chicken factories moving into farm land in Oregon and to ask you to SUPPORT the Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 85.

These large-scale animal operations do not resemble the type of farming most Oregonians would recognize as good, and they intend to take advantage of current Oregon law to move in. The area these companies are pursuing that I'm most familiar with is near Stayton and Scio. They are fertile farming areas already in use by many small farmers who value and protect the land as a resource.

I am personally a customer of a small organic farm located just across a creek from one of the proposed chicken factory sites. The land "my" farmers chose for their operation was based on an extensive search for farmland throughout the Willamette Valley. They had soil and water tested every which way. They found land east of Scio on Thompson Creek. The soil and water supply there is pristine.

Allowing an industrial scale operation to pollute their air and water from just across the creek would be a travesty to them and their land. It's an insult to the care "my" farmers give their land, water, crops, and animals every day. Further, it devalues the quality of their products for the benefit of a corporate, large scale, factory farming neighbor. This story has similarities across Oregon, so please SUPPORT the Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 85 for the benefit of all Oregon.

It might be true that the industrial factory farms supply an inexpensive product to many Oregonians. However, as Oregonians, our laws should place a factory in an area for factories and leave farmland to farmers. Our Century Farms deserve this protection as do newer farmers. Many of them pay the high fees and pass tests to become Certified Organic, etc. Oregon law should protect that work, those families, their farms, and our environment.

Specifically, the chicken factories that want to move into our Oregon farmland are really not farms. They have no need for the pristine soil and water I alluded to above. They don't raise anything on the land. They do it all indoors. They don't need to be in an area so valuable to current farmers.

I'm sure there have been many communications to you and others within Oregon

state government about ammonia in the air. Even if the ammonia could be reduced from unhealthy to annoying, how many farmers are willing to work in those conditions? Many may shutter their operations and leave customers like me without the food source we rely on.

In closing, these chicken factories aren't farming. They don't need to be consuming our farmland. They'll move in, take advantage of laws meant for real farmers, use the water real farmers need and pollute it simultaneously. They'll need to pave over, and build over, valuable farmland, add truck traffic to farm roads, and choke out real farmers with the stench of ammonia. The same stench will invade homes and classrooms. Meanwhile, Oregonians who have long depended on food from our responsible farmers will lose that source as family farms begin the cycle of attrition. I've already experienced this with the loss of our small, local organic dairy who used to deliver to our door.

The only way to stop this before it goes too far is putting a moratorium on mega production facilities until Oregon laws catch up to prevent abuse by food factories. Please support the Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 85.