

Submitter: Joseph Heil

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Hello, My name is Joseph Heil. In my spare time, I am a small hobby farmer. I am raising my family less than a mile from the proposed Foster Farm CAFO east of Scio. The property I live on has been in our family for the last 40 years. I have lived here and raised my family for the last 10 years. We have raised pigs, goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, cows, and horses as well as tend a garden and orchard to provide produce for our family. I love that I am able to live on a property that has fed and supported four generations of our family. I love that I get to tend the land with my children and hand down the knowledge bestowed upon me to be a steward of our environment. I also love the small but mighty school my children attend which is in even closer proximity to the school than our home.

I am here today to show my support for SB 85-1.

As a conservative farmer, I am deeply troubled by the proposed massive poultry operations looking to be sited less than one mile from my home and the impact they will have on the viability of our rural communities, our farms and our ranches.

Those of us who farm and ranch know that these massive operations will negatively impact our air, water and both the viability and livability of our local communities. It is also clear that our current laws and regulations have not kept up to date with the impacts that these operations could have.

Specifically, I am troubled that Oregon does not currently regulate air emissions from large CAFOs and one of the proposals is for 4.6 million birds less than a mile from a school. My children attend this school and my wife volunteers in the classroom. To see the school and the health of the children in attendance not be taken into consideration is a travesty. The state also does not limit that amount of groundwater that these operations can use, even when a facility is being proposed in a groundwater management area that is known to have a limited quantity of ground water. Lastly, we have been told by our county commissioners that the state has taken away their authority to put any reasonable safeguards on where mega poultry operations can be sited, which is ludicrous particularly when the county has a much better understanding of the local area and how these operations could negatively impact local farms, rural businesses and the people living here.

For all of the above reasons, it is only prudent that we put a pause on the permitting of new and expanding CAFOs until we can adequately study and address the impacts that these operations will have on our state.

Please support SB 85-1.