

March 6, 2023

Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Senator Jeff Golden
Senator Fred Girod
Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senator Kathleen Taylor

Re: SENATE BILL 85: Requires State Department of Agriculture to study confined animal feeding operations

Dear Committee Members:

As a long-time Oregonian that loves this state, I am looking for your leadership to hit the “pause” button on the widespread development of CAFOs in our home before they cause irreparable harm and suffering to the environment, our rural communities, innocent animals and the health of our citizenry. It is only wise, ethical and just to research (with an evidence-based analysis) the many potential impacts, before allowing anything like this to go forward in our state. As a voter, I rely on you to use your common sense, listen to your constituents and do the right thing.

I believe, as this of SB-85 says that we have a real emergency and emergencies or the threat of one require swift but well-considered action. “SECTION 6. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect on its passage.”.

Corporate controlled industrial agriculture has a significant impact on the environment, and factory farms are a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, and soil degradation. CAFOs prioritize profits over our health, communities, rural economies, and environment and exploit our natural resources and rural communities. In contrast, regenerative agriculture practices support healthy ecosystems, build rural economies, and provide nutritious food for our communities.

Oregon’s laws are not adequate to protect our communities from the destruction brought by these industrial facilities. Industrial agriculture has been carved out from any meaningful regulations and protections in Oregon. Our permitting process is simply a rubber stamp to pollute our clean air and water, cause cruel and unnecessary physical pain and mental distress to animals confined to CAFOs, degrade the economic and potentially physical health of our rural communities and those who live there.

There is much more scientific evidence regarding the economic, environmental, public health and animal welfare impacts that law makers should consider before CAFO permitting goes forward.

I would urge swift passage of SB 85.

Thank you,
Arianne Newton
Portland, Oregon

