

Good morning, Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Gerod, and members of the Committee. My name is Rebecca Orf, and I live in Southern Oregon, and am an almost 46-year resident of Oregon. I strongly support the -1 Amendment to SB 85.

I listened to the representatives from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) at the Informational Hearing last week. I am very concerned about what was said—as well as by what was not addressed.

I am concerned at hearing that compliance with existing state and federal requirements for Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) do not require testing of sub-surface ground contamination —and that it was stated that such testing is perhaps not even currently feasible. I am concerned that such sub-surface ground contamination can result in pollution of our waters for recreation, drinking, and bathing.

I am concerned that compliance with current CAFO requirements is dependent primarily on reports from the CAFOs themselves—much like relying on foxes to guard the henhouses.

I am concerned that DEQ and ODA lack the resources to (in most cases) conduct independent and unannounced testing for compliance with current requirements.

I am concerned that I heard nothing about monitoring the effect of CAFOs on air quality, small and medium-sized farmers, affected communities, or animal welfare.

I heard nothing about concerns that runoff from CAFOS can lead to algae blooms that can make our rivers, streams, groundwater, and lakes unfit for human and animal consumption or enjoyment—as has already occurred in other places in our country.

Much of the March 6 testimony from farmers focused on dairy and chicken farms. The reality is that our future cannot depend on animal and animal products to meet the food needs of our country and world—it is not sustainable nor the most efficient use of our agricultural resources. Many people, including myself for the last almost eight years, live healthy and robust lives without eating animals and animal products. Fruits, vegetables, nuts, and grains can provide all the nutrients and energy needed. By utilizing agricultural land for CAFOS, prime agricultural land becomes unavailable for growing other crops that could better feed our communities.

The -1 Amendment to SB 85 only asks for a moratorium on permitting or allowing further CAFOs in our state until we can ensure the safety of our water, air, small and medium-sized farms, communities, workers, and animal welfare. To not require this would demonstrate a reckless disregard for the welfare of Oregon's current citizens and communities, as well as future generations.