

Submitter: Kari Ott

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Hi, my name is Kari Ott from Burns Oregon. I am a CPA and also own a cow calf with my husband and children. We work hard to raise calves that are born in the spring and then we sell in the fall. We generally sell our calves straight to a feedlot operator and physically go and take our calves each year. While we are there, we are able to observe the conditions of the cattle and feed. Everyone should visit these facilities to see how well these facilities are put together and ran.

Cattle producers have been dealing with a lot of new law changes that affect our industry. These regulations are making it very difficult on ranchers and families trying to make a living. The pressures on CAFO holders to comply with ag overtime, CAT tax and paid sick leave in face of commodity prices are already forcing operations out of business. The proposed amendments to SB 85 would eliminate one of the options for existing operators to expand operations to continue meeting demand. The input costs of hay, corn, fuel etc. have increased substantially and caused the industry to be stretched thin already.

Beef is one of Oregon's top agricultural commodities. Our producers and feedlots comply with state laws, are stewards of our land, our rivers, and our environment. This bill is an unfair and unnecessary burden on our industry.

Our rural communities such as Burns rely on our entire ag community. We used to have a mill, but now have no industry besides cattle ranching and hay farming. This agriculture industry provides jobs and also are the individuals buying food and supplies at our local stores. A large part of my tax clients are agriculture related, which is what keeps our small business going so we can continue to pay our 9 employees.

Some of our current feedlots would be unable to continue operations within the next 5 years in light of the proposed moratorium. That could be catastrophic for producers trying to send cattle off for finishing (fattening them up after leaving the ranch and heading to processors) and ultimately getting sufficient supply to processors and consumers. Most of the ranchers don't have facilities to get the cattle finished, and if these facilities are required to close it would be detrimental to the beef food chain. Grocery prices are already making it difficult to feed the family and a decrease in beef supply will just make the prices skyrocket even higher.

Thank you for receiving my testimony and I encourage everyone to tour these facilities before voting on this bill.