

Submitter: Nikki Dennis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

I am an Oregon resident and I strongly support a moratorium on factory farms in Oregon for the following reasons:

-CAFOs are inefficient food systems. Enormous amounts of land and resources are used to confine and enslave and commodify cattle. It would be a more ethical and sustainable use of land to create crops that go directly to feed people, not ones that feed animals for slaughter.

-Even though there are few losses in the cattle industry by wolves, cattle loss is used as a scapegoat for the vicious state-sponsored killing of wolves who play important roles in the ecosystem when allowed to exist.

-All animals are worthy of having a life and the freedom to not be terrorized. Cows for meat are either confined in stalls or frequently crowded together on lots. Dairy cows are separated from their calves who then go on to be lifelong inseminated dairy cows themselves or slaughtered as babies for veal. Chickens are held in cages no bigger than a sheet of paper. Pigs are often forced to exist in crates where they can't turn around.

-People who work in these facilities are often exposed to an industry that causes them trauma and exposes them to unsafe working conditions as well as hazardous toxic fumes. Recently, even children were found to be working on a factory farm "kill floor" in another state..

-With the pressing drought here in Oregon and elsewhere, it must be acknowledged that this is an UNSUSTAINABLE system. There are multiple national stories showing ranchers selling off their herds as they cannot feed/water them with some cows even being shot by helicopter when they are abandoned on public lands by farmers. With water resources becoming more scarce, erecting more factory farms is irresponsible.

-Antibiotics and growth hormones given to the animals are not only difficult and unnecessary for them, but for humans as well. These have been shown to decrease antibiotic efficacy to treat diseases and fills us with unneeded medications, hormones, and often a diet heavy in corn and soy. Additionally, diseases such as the bird flu and swine flu (and likely Covid) stem from our twisted relationship with the natural world. This oppressive relationship will only worsen unless it is perceived differently right now and changed for the better.

-CAFOs can have egregious environmental consequences that result in soil, air, and water pollution, often affecting minority and disenfranchised communities. Nearby water sources can be contaminated from animal waste runoff and the air contaminated with the stench of large numbers of farm animals in close proximity. Increasingly frequent extreme weather exacerbates these instances, leading to further environmental damage without regard for those affected.

-AgGag laws that have been passed or attempted to be passed in many states show the power of the industry and the ways in which they are often protected from anything they do not want exposed such as unsanitary conditions, inhumane treatment, confined spaces, and even gassing animals or chick shredding. The criminalization of whistleblowers and activists who try to protect employees from harm or report animal cruelty is shameful. The lack of federal protection laws for factory farm animals in this "advanced country" is despicable. Therefore, it is up to each state to legislate compassion and protect constituents from environmental and biological harms.

Animals should never be regarded as possessions - they love, they have personalities, they mourn, they experience joy when loved, and they feel pain and terror. We are but one creature on this planet that is supposed to be share. Our ability as humans to cause suffering as well as inflict immense power and pain over groups we deem as "others" (human or nonhuman) does not mean that it is something we should take part in. A moratorium on factory farms in this state we all call home is a step in the right direction to demonstrate just that.