

Pamela Fitzpatrick
Eugene
Support - SB-85-1
Senate Committee on Natural Resources

March 7, 2023

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is Pamela Fitzpatrick and I reside in Eugene in Senator Prozanski's district.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 85-1 Amendment, a moratorium on permitting Tier 2 CAFOs or expansion of current CAFOs to tier 2 level.

SB-85 only focuses on Tier 2 CAFOs, the largest of the large, thus, it does seem we can easily justify pausing the permitting process as we design a system that protects our surface water, groundwater, land, air, and communities.

It is much easier and cheaper to design a system that works than it is to repair a broken one. It took years of community organizing and legal actions to slow down the groundwater pollution produced by a cluster of Yakima Valley, Washington, dairies. Amongst other things, these dairies are now required to provide safe, clean, free drinking water for the families who had their wells polluted by these dairies.

Now we have a similar situation in Morrow County Oregon. The businesses that polluted the groundwater there should be providing the community free clean drinking and bathing water. It appears that our government will be providing this service, but the bill should be sent back to the polluters.

We have approximately 500 CAFOs registered in Oregon, five state inspectors. With inspections required every 10 months there are 600 to 700 routine yearly inspections. This does not take into account the emergency inspections, such as when a resident calls to report manure flooded surface water. How can these five people possibly protect our state?

I keep hearing from state agencies that Oregon has robust permitting and testing systems in place. If that is so, why is the ground water in Morrow County polluted? Why are we continuing to have more frequent blue-green algae outbreaks?

Groundwater and surface water need to have ongoing continuous monitoring, not just periodical sampling. It's my understanding that there is technology that can provide current time data on the nutrient levels in the ground. This should be public information, it's our groundwater. Production should stop as soon as the nutrient level reaches an unsafe level.

I moved to Eugene from the Piedmont area of North Carolina in 1979. When I left North Carolina there were small hog farms in each of the 100 counties. I moved back to North Carolina in 1993 for five years, this time to eastern North Carolina, Pender County. What a huge change. Hog CAFOs had started popping up in eastern North Carolina in the late 1980s. By the mid 90s most of the hogs were in these CAFOs rather than scattered across the state. Lagoons were flooding frequently; billboards stated that the "Odor was compliments of the Hog Industry"; there were ongoing extreme fish kills mainly due to the increased nutrient level in the waterways near the CAFOs; fishermen were suffering from open lesions and mental confusion caused by toxins produced by the dinoflagellate *Pfiesteria* that flourished in the

nutrient rich waterways. Pfiesteria was soon referred to as “the cell from hell”. This was a shocking change in a short time.

The US and North Carolina Governments did not protect us. Citizens risked their livelihoods and their health in efforts to force our leaders to take action. Dr. JoAnn Burkholder, one of my heroes, discovered the cause of the poisoned waterways, but for years our “leaders” refused to accept her science.

Please protect Oregon by taking smart, wise steps now.

Thanks you.