

To: Chair Golden, Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Regarding: Support for SB 85-1

From: Emma Newton, Milwaukie, OR

Thank you Chair Golden and members of the committee for this opportunity to submit public comment in support of SB 85-1. My name is Emma Newton. I am a born and raised Oregonian that strongly supports the efforts of rural communities to stop the expansion of mega-chicken CAFOS in our beautiful state.

In 2022, Foster Farms was bought by Atlas Holdings, a CT corporation with international business interests. This is the company that is proposing building mega-poultry factories in our state. An east coast based investor is one of the investors for these proposed sites and is also the same investor behind the explosion of poultry CAFOs in Nebraska for Costco. It is the same industry playbook that has been used again and again across the country and it's clear that the industry is now targeting Oregon.

The harmful impacts of Industrial CAFOs on the environment, surrounding communities, our regional food system, and small farmers is significant and permanent once these facilities are sited. In state after state across the country, the research has shown that areas with high concentrations of poultry operations live under the constant weight of depressed property values, poisoned and over-extracted water, noxious air, economic hardship, and threats to their health, wellbeing and livelihood all to the benefit of corporate profits. There are so many places around our country where there is nothing left of our rural communities because they have been hollowed out by inadequate laws and corporate greed and it didn't have to be that way.

In the face of this threat, Oregon's laws are not adequate to protect our beloved home from the destruction brought by large industrial CAFOs. Historically, Oregon has worked to protect farms from burdensome regulations that would make the already slim margins of farming even smaller. Yet as operations have grown in size and scale, the state has not modernized its rules to ensure that contaminants from large-scale operations are adequately mitigated. Today, industrial CAFOs are taking advantage of these exemptions that in the past

have allowed small and mid sized farmers to flourish in Oregon creating the wonderful local food economy that urban and rural residents cherish.

Without updates to our existing laws and regulations to protect our small and mid-sized farms and our natural resources, these industrial mega-poultry operations will take advantage of these loopholes to extract unlimited water using the stock watering exemption, spew toxic ammonia emissions and particulates a half mile from a rural elementary school, build on high value farmland on the banks of a river with protected fish habitat and use our rural communities as toxic dumping grounds for their untreated and unregulated waste all without liability to the harm their causing to rural communities and our environment.

Industrial CAFOs, like the kind being proposed here, concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a few individuals and prioritize short-term profits over long-term sustainability. In contrast, small and mid-sized farms prioritize sustainable agriculture practices that are beneficial to the environment, public health, and build diversity and resilience in the local economy. Small and mid-sized farms and the communities they support, are what help make Oregon such a wonderful place to call home. These communities are against the expansion of these facilities in Oregon. They need all of us to stand up for our home and help them protect our air, water, health, economies, and natural resources from this extractive industrial model before it is too late. I urge you to take action to hit pause on the expansion of factory farms in Oregon and support SB 85-1. Thank you.