

To: Oregon Senate Natural Resources Committee  
Re: SB-85

Oregonian citizens and the future of Oregon's natural resources need a bill that brings a strong moratorium on concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

I am a retired wildlife biologist who worked in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Interior on animal disease issues, animal welfare policy, and climate change research. I was involved in the "One Health" initiative to increase awareness of disease transmission risk among domestic animals, humans, and wildlife. The onset of CAFOs in the 90s brought a new set of human and animal health hazards never seen before, and to this day, I personally believe these risks have not been sufficiently assessed or regulated.

CAFOs are an attempt to industrialize animal agriculture, and in so doing, they degrade most people's quality of life, and threaten our health and safety. The massive concentrations of animals and feces are habitats for bacteria, viruses, and fungi that can move through air as well as water, threatening the health of people and wildlife. Flies, rodents, and other animals can be attracted to CAFOs, and become vectors spreading more pathogens. Polluted air, polluted soil, polluted water, harmed and suffering animals, struggling competing family farms, and difficult and dangerous employee working conditions, are all trademarks of factory farms.

As for the idea that a moratorium could only apply to poultry farms, please note: 1) Oregon's mega-dairy factory farms use millions of gallons of water every day. Oregon is in a long-term drought, and it would be hard to argue that mega-dairies are the best use of the critical and limited resource: water. 2) Dairy CAFOs produce millions of kilograms of methane every year. We are in a climate change crisis and cannot rationalize this continued industrialized methane production from cows. 3) The massive concentrations of cow feces pollute water with nitrates, and the most contaminated groundwater in Oregon is located where else but where the largest mega-dairies operate.

We need a strong bill that would halt the spread of all types of CAFOs, to protect our environment and our communities. We need a moratorium long enough to: allow the affected communities to heal, give officials plenty of time to assess all negative CAFO impacts to the public, the environment, the employees, the animals, and the local economies, and improve all regulations so our State effectively eliminates the negative impacts of industrialized animal farming. We need to address the problem of factory farms in total; not just one type of factory farm or one aspect of factory farms.

Communities, laborers, family farmers, water, soil, air, and animals deserve more respect and security. All of the above should not be treated so badly for the sake of profits for the few. Oregon governance should be better than this.

Thank you,  
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