

Submitter: Armando Elenes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

To the Senate Committee on Natural Resources:

SB 85 is unnecessary and unfair to those that operate responsibly and ethically. Penalizing farms solely on their size is just PLAIN WRONG. The amendment proposes to arbitrarily prohibit the Oregon Department of Agriculture from issuing Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permits to operations that have over a certain number of animals

The consequence of SB 85 is that it will HARM farm workers who receive premium pay, benefits and family health insurance while not improving the environment. For over 16 years the UFW has represented workers at Threemile Canyon Farms who have enjoyed wages and benefits many farm workers rarely get, including job advancement and education opportunities, health, paid holidays and paid time off benefits, just to name a few.

Over the past 20 years, Threemile has proven itself as a responsible, civic and community minded industry leader. In addition to the employment benefits, some of the positive impacts to our economy, environment, and way of life include:

Threemile through its union contract with the Robert F. Kennedy Medical Plan provides coverage to UFW members and their families - probably the only private health insurance that does so for farm workers in the state of Oregon with a very low annual deductible for the worker's family.

Threemile is an environmental leader operating on a closed loop system, meaning they use, reuse, or recycle almost everything it produces to the benefit of our natural resources.

An onsite digester pulls methane gas from manure which improves air quality and powers the farm with clean energy.

The combination of crop and milk production means they actively recycle nutrient-rich dairy manure into natural fertilizer and compost, using substantially less commercial fertilizer and growing more certified organic vegetables and grains. Threemile has routinely gone beyond regulatory environmental requirements, exceeding established standards.

There is a concerning trend emerging where legislation seeks to pit so-called "small family farms" against other types of operations, namely "industrial" CAFOs that are

depicted as cold, faceless businesses. This is a false narrative as it says nothing about how they care for their employees nor the environment.

Many groups make statements to use a farm's size as a proxy for determining whether that farm is a responsible actor to its employees, animals, and the environment. Farm size is NOT a determining factor of a farm's ethic.

UFW urges you not to discriminate against a responsible farm in Oregon agriculture and Oregon business. Please Say "No" to SB 85.

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