

Submitter: Megan Cozart

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

Good Morning Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

My name is Megan Cozart, my family is a contract grower for Foster Farms and we raise the *shocking* number of 2.1 million chickens a year near the small town of Dayton. We have lived, worked, and raised our family on this farm for the past 19 years, and the former owner lived, worked, and raised his family for 25 years before us.

But what I want to talk about today is the community of Dayton and its unique history with Oregon's poultry industry going back many years to when turkeys were raised here before it was chickens. At one time within the last decade, there were 9 broiler farms operating in a 6 mile radius of Dayton. Four farms have since retired, but today there are still 5 farms fully operational and fully CAFO permitted. Between those 5 farms, there are about 5.9 million chickens produced annually!! Creeks, rivers, and irrigation canals flow around these farms. Several dairies, nurseries, hazelnuts, blueberries and of course vineyards are also found within this radius, and all are able to coexist and be productive.

The employees and families of these farms are members of the community. Their children attend Dayton schools, play sports, and ride their bikes in their neighborhoods. Dayton hosts community parades, picnics, and barbeques, and the ever popular Dayton Friday Nights in the park, and lets not forget all the local wine tasting. Does this sound like a community on the verge of a detrimental collapse and a threat to society?

Please, let the farmers produce food for the people and don't overregulate what's not broken!!! Instead, focus on the strict regulations already in place!!! All CAFO permits are written in compliance with the Clean Water Act and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and must be approved and signed off by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Recently legislators were invited to tour a large poultry farm in the area. Those that chose to attend, or sent staff in their place, were able to see first hand the type of farms we have, how the buildings are constructed to be environmentally friendly, the processes and systems we have in place, and how the potential for run off and contamination is unfounded.

Food insecurity is becoming increasingly common. Farmers do their best to produce high quality food in quantities that will sustain local families, but constantly having to

defend their livelihoods is taking away from putting food on those tables.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Cozart