

To: Senator Lieber, members of the Senate Committee on Rules
From: Emma Newton
Re: Public Comment on SB85-4

Thank you Chair Lieber, members of the committee for the opportunity to submit public comment in support of SB 85 -4. My name is Emma Newton and I am a born and raised Oregon from Milwaukie. I strongly support the work of the communities being threatened by industrial farms including the massive Foster Farms poultry operations in the Willamette Valley and the residents of Eastern Oregon and neighbors of the industrial dairies in Eastern Oregon that have been impacted by high nitrates levels in their drinking water.

In appreciation of all the work of Senator Dembrow and Senator Golden to listen to the concerns of impacted community members over the past year, I believe the -4 amendment is a great start in tightening up the language of our existing regulations and closing the loopholes in Oregon's regulations that have long been exploited by industrial CAFO operations.

As we have heard during the previous two public hearings on SB 85, there are deep concerns from rural community members, small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers and Oregonians across the state about the immediate threat posed by these proposed by these multi-nationally owned mega-chicken operations to our land, air, water, and communities. It is clear that our current regulations do not have the capacity to adequately and appropriately manage the impacts of these operations. The -4 amendment represents the hard work of this body to address these concerns and is a step in the right direction in protecting Oregon's environment and communities from these harms.

While the -4 is a good start, the legislature should also look to address air emissions from industrial CAFOs that harm the health of neighbors, impair waterways, and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Currently, there are no federal or state laws that protect communities from the toxic emissions of mega-poultry operations. Poultry operations emit toxically high levels of ammonia and phosphorus as well as feathers and dust. Some studies have indicated that these emissions can travel up to 3000 meters from the site. The EPA under the Clean Air Act has the authority to regulate CAFO emissions, but in 2003, the EPA entered into a private agreement with industry that exempted CAFOs from air emission laws until new emission estimating methodologies were established. As of 2023, no emission methodologies have been finalized and CAFO emissions are not regulated in any state, including Oregon. The EPA has stated that recommendations are pending and could be expected later in 2023.

Despite these gaps, I urge the committee to support the -4 amendment as I believe it successfully balances protecting rural communities and our land and water while not being burdensome to small and mid-sized family farms and ranchers in Oregon.

Please vote yes on -4 and pass it out of committee. Thank you.