

Submitter: Jim Strong
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

I am opposed to passage of this bill and its amendment(s) as a tax paying voting constituent & property owner. If enacted the bill would mandate subsidizing the livestock industry with public tax dollars (\$2 million via companion SB985), a subsidy available to a small fraction of the state's & my county's population. Public dollars such as these would be much more effectively spent as increases to local programs benefiting a much greater portion of taxpayers & residents such as public health, public mental health, clean safe drinking water, & roadway improvement...more bang for my buck. While the recent spate of livestock kills by OR158 was distressing to ranchers & some locals, those kills within Lake County amounted to 1/10,000th of the county's cattle population of 76,000 head as of May's reported inventory. The combined kill tally for OR158 overall in the state amounts to a far smaller portion of Oregon's 1.25 million head of cattle. While these livestock losses may be attributed to the federal & state policies of management (or mismanagement) & endangered species protection, another solution should be implemented besides taxpayer subsidies to a relatively small group within the state. I would also note that JR Simplot, one of the largest cattle operations in the country & owner of the ZX, Viewpoint & Vaughn ranches, would also be a beneficiary of this subsidy legislation should it pass.

I am fully aware of & support the value of Farm to Table, ranching, & farming, as well as the costs, expenses, & hard work involved. None of these in my mind justifies any more of my tax dollars going into subsidies benefitting a relatively small niche population within the state. If somehow public funds must be spent on the livestock industry I think these monies would be much better spent in continuing efforts to remove the protections afforded to the predator species, addressing the legal civil issues & obstacles presented by various activist groups such as Cascadia Wildlands.

Again, I oppose passage of SB777 & SB985.