

Submitter: Jason Sherbondy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB80

I am writing to you today in support of SB 80. We must halt the expansion of factory farming, which the Oregon Department of Agriculture defines as large CAFOs, in our state's groundwater management areas until the contamination is reduced to safe levels.

When it comes to animal welfare, CAFOs aren't aligned with the progressive, humane values that most Oregonians hold. The animals housed in CAFOs are crammed into tight spaces, suffer untreated wounds and diseases, are often trampled to death, and are raised in unsanitary conditions full of feces, blood, and chemicals.

I believe this animal torture reflects the values held by those who manage CAFOs. They are profit-driven and do not properly manage the waste these sick and contaminated animals produce. Some of the waste is used to fertilize crops that feed the animals. Other waste is stored in giant lagoons that often leak and contaminate natural waterways.

The result is that people living near these CAFOs drink water from wells contaminated with nitrates and other dangerous and potentially lethal chemicals far beyond EPA hazardous levels. Oregonians are getting sick and even dying from drinking this water, and every year, it gets worse!

SB80 is a significant first step in protecting Oregonians' drinking water. It is also a great first step in representing Oregonian values by pausing CAFO expansion until we can have real, honest discussions about animal abuse.

The truth is small and mid-sized farms prioritize higher welfare standards, such as access to pasture and the space to carry out natural behaviors. Those may be a better option for Oregon.

So, let's support SB80 and impose a moratorium on CAFOs to strategize how to protect our water and Oregonians better. This moratorium will also allow legislators and Oregonians to reflect and discuss whether CAFOs should be allowed in Oregon at all.

I urge you to vote for SB 80 to protect our precious drinking water, protect Oregonians, and ease the suffering of tortured animals!

Thank you,
Jason Sherbondy
Portland, OR