



February 3, 2026

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
Oregon Legislative Assembly

RE: Support for SB 1539

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 1539, which would allow individuals who are properly trained and certified by the State of Oregon to verify if cattle are pregnant. The Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is supportive of this commonsense bill that protects animal health, increases needed access to animal health services in underserved areas, is aligned with state economic goals, and positions the livestock industry for herd expansion.

OFB is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing over 6,500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

Oregon needs more veterinarians. This is especially true for large animal veterinarians in regions of the state that are sparsely populated. While this bill would have benefits for cattle producers statewide, it is important to note that cattle ranching operations are typically found where urban pressures are largely reduced or even absent. This presents a unique challenge for an industry that relies on advanced training but is geographically disparate. According to Oregon State University, "Most of the state's estimated 11,000 cattle ranches are in southern and eastern Oregon, particularly in Malheur, Morrow, Harney, Klamath, and Lake counties."¹ Collectively, these five counties have a population density 3.6 people per square mile. Contrast this with Multnomah County, which boasts

¹ <https://www.wlj.net/osu-research-outreach-drive-cattle-industry-to-success/>

1,712 residents per square mile, or a population concentration more than 47,000% higher than the five counties identified by OSU.

In this context, animal health providers associated with the livestock industry need all the help they can get. At last count by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Oregon has more than 1.2 million head of cattle.² Adoption of this bill would encourage the more efficient use of limited resources—our large animal veterinarians—by allowing properly trained and certified individuals to focus on routine livestock reproductive care, thereby freeing up our veterinarians to directly target their expertise on more immediate and existential animal health pressures.

Nationally, the cattle herd is the smallest it has been in the last 75 years.³ This is not due to lack of consumer demand. One does not need to look or go far to see the current market price of beef and see the impact on consumers' grocery bills. Oregon is not immune from these impacts and the long-term trendlines within the cattle industry that are anticipated as a result. As the market continues to balance out as it seeks to meet consumer demand, the lengthy process of growing the overall herd size will only continue to grow in importance. Not only will this serve as a practical, meaningful benefit to a critical piece of Oregon's rural economy that annually generates more than \$900 million, but it is also aligned with Oregon's economic prosperity goals.

In conclusion, this is a compromise bill that is the product of a strong policy development process. We appreciate the hard and pragmatic work that has gone into it within the Oregon Legislature as well as the guidance provided by our agency partners. Further, SB 1539 and prior iterations illustrate what is possible when partisan politics are put aside in favor of policy advancements intended to support real needs in our communities, and we are proud to be a part of moving the bill to this point and respectfully request your support.

Sincerely,



Ryan J. Krabill
Oregon Farm Bureau

² https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=OREGON

³ <https://www.drovers.com/news/industry/u-s-beef-herd-continues-downward-86-2-million-head>