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## OREGON CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB

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To: Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club  
Date: March 9, 2017  
RE: Senate Bill 197

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee: On behalf of the more than 20,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club in Oregon, I am pleased to offer some written testimony on Senate Bill 197. Thank you for considering my comments.

As an organization with a long history of working on air quality and climate change, the Sierra Club is strongly supportive of SB 197. Oregon is currently facing a growing air quality and climate threat from new industrial-scale mega-dairy operations seeking to take advantage of our lax air pollution laws. Our state is already home to the nation's largest industrial-scale dairy operation. Located near Boardman, Threemile Canyon Farms houses some 70,000 cows onsite and is a major source of ammonia emissions and climate change-causing pollutants like methane.

As you no doubt know, methane is a potent greenhouse gas, roughly 30 times more potent in causing climate change than carbon dioxide. Unfortunately, Oregon has no program in place to address the most significant sources of agricultural methane. In 2008, the Oregon Dairy Air Quality Task Force estimated that dairy emissions at that time were a substantial portion of Oregon's ammonia and methane emissions. However, it was then – and still is – unknown what proportion of Oregon's methane emissions come from these sources.

Some dairies in Oregon have adopted methane digester technology, in part due to generous state tax credits. But because no agency is independently monitoring actual methane releases from the growing number of large dairies in Oregon, it is unclear to what extent these digesters are truly mitigating overall methane output from these operations.

Oregon's Dairy Air Quality Task Force recommended in 2008 a two-step program to address air quality issues relating to the rising number of dairy cows in Oregon. The program was intended to start as a voluntary program in 2009 ("Phase I") in which mandatory targets based on best management practices would be developed. In 2015, during "Phase II," the program targets were supposed to become mandatory and new dairies would be required to comply with the program upon startup.

Today, Oregon is facing a new 30,000 head industrial dairy operation called Lost Valley Ranch, located near Threemile Canyon Farms. If approved, this facility would generate 187 million tons of manure each year – similar to a large Oregon city, but without wastewater treatment. Instead, liquid manure would be stored in open-air lagoons and disposed of on fields, posing significant risk to both air and water quality. And again, because Oregon has no program to monitor and protect air quality from these sources (and no mandatory programs for this new dairy to comply with), the combined impact of air pollution from Lost Valley Ranch, Threemile, other factory farms, and future operations will only continue to grow.

For these reasons, the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club believes it is time to pass Senate Bill 197 to finally move forward with an Oregon Dairy Air Quality Program. Thank you very much for considering my comments and please let me know if I can be of further assistance to the Committee.