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I live on a 310 acre farm and ranch in rural Republic County and a mile south of the Nebraska border. I graduated in 1978 from Kansas State University with a degree in Agricultural Economics and a minor in Animal Science. My farm was homesteaded by my family six generations ago. After farming for twenty years, I enrolled in Dental School and became a practicing rural dentist in 1999.

I ranch part time now, but I am still a beef producer and a fierce supporter of animal agriculture in Kansas. I like pigs! In my younger days I sold Moorman's feed to local hog producers and I would also feed out a hundred head of my own fat hogs each summer. In the early 1980's my part time job was as a salesman for swine confinement buildings.

Attached is an aerial photograph of a relatively small CAFO, or confined animal feeding operation. These buildings and lagoon are located about four miles east of me, and are a few hundred feet north of the Nebraska border. They won't ever admit to the numbers, but my estimation is these buildings house about 14,000 sows. Those sows create 249,000 fat hogs per year. In states like Iowa and Nebraska, many CAFO's being put into service now commonly have 30,000 to 50,000 sows capacities.

This CAFO near me is *a very bad neighbor*. I have always had friends and neighbors that raised hogs, and a little smell is just part of living in the country. But downwind of this particular operation, the country has pretty much emptied out. Multi-generational farms have been abandoned. The stench is incredible.

The research is full of proof regarding the bacterial plume that emanates from these maximum-size hog units. Airborne contaminants like ammonia create the smell, but the real concern is the range of bacterial and viral pathogens. The potential for catastrophic pollution events with groundwater and streams is always present.

There is always the argument made that these big units create jobs. But the great majority of jobs associated with the unit in my neighborhood are filled by immigrants. Few others would tolerate the working conditions.

A group of twelve concerned neighbors tried to stop the expansion of this CAFO about ten years ago, and the case went all the way to the Nebraska Supreme Court. But with the stripping of Nebraska's Initiative 300 Anti-Corporate Farming Law, Jefferson County was declared a "Livestock Friendly County," and the construction went on unimpeded. This bill we are examining today also tears down the safeguards that our Kansas law has given us for over 80 years.

Republic County is still a collection of family farms. Some farmers still raise hogs. But as I understand it, this bill will take away the requirement that a hog unit be run by a local farmer. It will open up the ownership to out-of-state and even foreign investors, and insulate them from any real legal or financial responsibility. They would not have to be a family farmer. They would not have to live near the CAFO. And if our citizens or even our county commissioners don't want that hog unit built, no one could stop it.

I know from experience how hard hogs are on these buildings. These units have about a 20 to 25-year life. A limited liability corporation could, if they choose, declare bankruptcy and then abandon the buildings, and the county would be stuck with them and the lagoon.

Not many people are left out here in the country, and we are constantly struggling to attract young families and fresh retirees to keep our little communities vibrant. The placement of one of these large hog units in the area would in my opinion destroy what little we have left. On a personal level, I am a rural dentist. If I have to live downwind of so much stench and bacteria, I will simply shut down my office, eliminate the seven jobs I have created, and move away. I did not choose to move back to the country only to be subjected to an industrial-sized lagoon full of pathogens filling the air that I breathe and the water I drink.

SB 191 is a very bad idea.

Thank you for reading and listening.

Jim Cossaart DDS

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