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ROBERT W. PRITCHARD
STATE REPRESENTATIVE · 70TH DISTRICT

October 30, 2012

Illinois Pollution Control Board
Clerk's Office
James R. Thompson Center, Suite 11-500
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

Subject: Docket R-2012-23, Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations Proposed Amendments.

Dear Members of the Board:

Let me begin by expressing appreciation to the Board for holding one of its hearings on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Rule Amendments in DeKalb. I regret that I could not be present to welcome you to the heart of my legislative district, but appreciate this format to offer comments on the proposed amendments for your consideration.

As you can tell from traveling here, the area is a mix of rural and urban with agriculture, and specifically livestock production, playing an important role in the local economy. DeKalb County is a leading producer of hogs and cattle in the state and farmers have been innovators in animal husbandry as well as responsible stewards of the land for well over 100 years. The county Farm Bureau was formed in 1912 to assist farmers with the adoption of the latest technology and soil improvement techniques. The farms are operated by families who for generations have made their living from the land and have a vested economic interest in good stewardship, conservation and the best farming practices.

The DeKalb County Board has made persistent and conscientious decisions to protect farm land from urban sprawl and to perpetuate favorable coexistence among non-farmers and farming operations. It is a stated public policy to protect open space, responsible farming practices and conservation of land and water resources.

As a native of this area and the fifth generation of farmers in DeKalb County, I too have a vested interest in good farming practices, preserving the land and protecting the water quality which sustains life for humans, plants and animals. It is with this perspective that I share comments on behalf of the residents of the region regarding regulations on animal production and responsible farming practices.

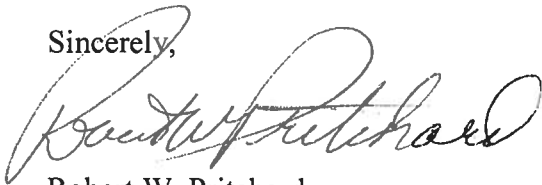
I compliment those involved in developing these proposed rules for their concerns for maintaining clean water and air; their responsiveness to suggestions from the agricultural industry and their efforts to create fair regulations. This process has been one of give and take with all parties, respect for the viewpoints of diverse groups, and the writing of proposed rules based upon sound science.

These proposed rules should mirror federal CAFO rules and avoid duplicative or conflicting regulation. It is critical that regulation be reasonable, fair, and clear so that livestock producers can comply with the intent of the law while continuing to use best practices and make an economic living.

As Illinois suffers from the national economic downturn and its businesses struggle to remain profitable, employ workers and compete in an international market place; our regulations must be fair, affordable and not unnecessarily add to the cost of doing business in our state. The proposed rules are a step in that direction.

Again, thank you for your efforts to protect our environment, consider the various interests in this issue and develop rules that are reasonable and affordable for livestock producers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert W. Pritchard". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Robert W. Pritchard