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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

I support SB 85, the factory farm moratorium. Up to 80% of the pigs and hogs which go to slaughter from factory farms have serious health conditions which may never receive treatment. There are dangerous gases produced by manure on these farms, such as methane and ammonia, that can cause the development of pneumonia in these animals. Factory farms keep animals in spaces that are too small for their health. Factory farms increase production levels unnaturally for livestock. The factory farming process for dairy cattle considers a milk-producing cow to be spent after just three lactation cycles. The natural lifespan for most cattle breeds that produce milk at commercial levels is at least 20 years. This industry aggressively feeds and breeds the animals to produce as much milk as possible. Hormones and stimulants are sometimes used when it is legal as well. Factory farms sometimes use forced molting to increase egg production. For the average farmer not using industry techniques, their hens will lay an average of one egg per day after they go through the molting process. Factory farming seeks to double that production by forcing them into another cycle. They do this by placing the chicken in a dark environment for up to eight hours without access to food or water. Up to 10% of hens die from this process even though some in the industry consider it to be a best practice. Factory farms do not always focus on veterinary care. Because there is an oath that veterinarians take when they begin their practice, it can prevent some from servicing a farm in their area. Even when vets will make a house call, they do so as a way to try to prevent animal suffering. Some farmers following industry practices will opt for a different solution, providing antibiotics to the animal as a way to proactively stop them from becoming sick. Factory farms do not allow animals to express their natural behaviors.

The ASPCA reports that up to 99% of the farmed animals in the United States are unable to exhibit their natural behaviors because of the industry practices of factory farming. Some animals only have the option to sit or stand. Factory farming contributes to global warming. Factory farms are responsible for the majority of the emissions that occur from agricultural activities around the world. Roughly 6% of GHG production in the United States comes from the agricultural sector. Over 90% of what reaches the atmosphere each year is due to the processes of scale that are involved in factory farming. The soil erosion issues caused by agricultural activities is a significant ecological concern. When soil lacks the same ability to absorb carbon, then this creates an indirect contribution to the potential issue of global warming as well.