

SENATE BILL 841 Water Pollution Control - Discharge Permits - Industrial Poultry Operations

Bill Sponsor: Senator Clarence Lam

Committee: Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs

Person Submitting: Monica Brooks

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Committee Members:

My name is Monica Brooks. I am testifying as a mom, grandmom and an Eastern Shore resident in support of Senate Bill 841 calling for a moratorium on all new CAFO's. Over the last few years I have testified about high respiratory disease rates on the shore, and I have testified regarding the health problems that my family, particularly my daughter has experienced. I shared with this committee that she's been prescribed an inhaler and diagnosed with asthma although asthma does not run in our family. And how my vibrant daughter has had multiple trips to the ER because she could not breathe. In Wicomico county where we live, 1 in 4 Middle School children have asthma! Do you know what it's like to see your child helpless and struggling to breathe? Gasping for breath and looking to you to alleviate the suffering. My granddaughter is also a victim suffering from asthma. We have a huge problem with our air.

The Eastern Shore is being flooded by large concentrated animal feeding operations known as CAFO's. These operations each have 18 industrial fans releasing toxins into our air for our children to breathe. Each one of these monstrosities produces tons of manure and ammonia. CAFOs are being placed dangerously close to neighborhoods and schools with no consideration for the health and safety of communities. One such 4 house CAFO was placed right across from the playground of my daughter's school! Just a few years ago I was in a 2 year fight to prevent a 13 house no land CAFO project from coming to my neighborhood and won! Our County approved this project to be placed on top of the Paleo Channel which is the source of water for our wells!! Who would be ok with this? Due to this fight, I was labeled anti-poultry and anti-farming! I am not anti poultry but pro family and community safety.

Families of the Eastern Shore are crying out for your help. We are calling for a Moratorium now. There are far too many unanswered questions. Why so much opposition against regulating polluters? Why is it ok to continue to put our lives at risk? Is industry more important than people? Excess ammonia, particulate matter and manure is a problem. And the more factory farms there are, the more opportunities there are to make our air more toxic than it already is. This mother is pleading with you to pump the brakes on an industry out of control by passing a favorable vote for Senate Bill 841.

Thank you

Monica Brooks