

MISSOURI HAS BECOME GROUND ZERO FOR FARM ANIMALS



A contentious battle has been brewing in Missouri for the past few years. The subject of this conflict is the welfare of farm animals housed in factory farms, which are often referred to as CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations). CAFOs are industrial-sized livestock operations in which hundreds or even thousands of farm animals are typically confined in extremely cramped quarters 24/7; the animals never see the light of day or receive more than a minimal amount of care, and they are frequently subjected to abusive practices. The rationale for all of this mistreatment is maximization of profits.

Currently, in Missouri, local county commissioners and county health boards can regulate CAFOs to protect public health, the environment, and even the welfare of the animals confined on such industrialized farms.

Local control of factory farms, especially by county health boards, has kept many CAFOs out of Missouri. Missouri is one of the few states in the Midwest that still permits county commissioners and county health boards to regulate CAFOs. In fact, Missouri has become an oasis of “local control” of factory farms, as all of the eight states contiguous to Missouri have laws prohibiting local municipalities and counties from regulating CAFOs.



24/7 living quarters for sows used for breeding

As a result, large corporate farms and multi-national agricultural interests are pouring an excessive amount of money into the coffers of Missouri state legislators in an effort to strip counties of their authority to regulate factory farms. **Not surprisingly, large agricultural corporations have directed more money into the Missouri Legislature than any other state legislature in the country.**

SB 391 which was introduced into the Missouri Legislature is intended to eliminate or seriously weaken the authority of local communities to regulate large factory farms.

The intent of SB 391 is to make Missouri home to hundreds of massive factory farms that often mistreat animals. It should be emphasized that regulations by county health boards and by county commissioners have been successful in keeping factory farms out of many counties in Missouri. Twenty counties in Missouri currently have county health board regulations on CAFOs.

SB 391 is a direct attack on local control and would stop local governments from protecting family farms, rural citizens, the quality of our water and air and the welfare of farm animals from the negative impacts of factory farms.



Hundreds of pigs crammed into filthy crowded pens at a CAFO

SB 391 would specifically prohibit counties from regulating the disposal of waste from factory farms so as to prevent the pollution of streams, waterways, as well as neighboring public and private property.

Corporate agriculture views our state as ground zero – the site of the last showdown in their attempt to make the Midwest regulation-free for factory farms.