



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



Room 423 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 – Contact Barbara Mustoe Phone: (573) 751-2306

Week of January 28, 2008

Protecting Air and Water Quality in Our Communities

Last year, there was a lot of discussion in the Missouri Senate about concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). It was an issue that brought the concerns of local farmers, county commissions, residents, and business owners out into the open. This year, I have filed a bill similar to one that I introduced last year that focuses on the environmental effects CAFOs have on the communities in which they operate. The legislation would deal with agricultural operations including those that convert animal parts or waste onto other products (such as petroleum) that persistently violate environmental standards.

Senate Bill 738 makes the air and water quality in our communities a top priority by targeting persistent offenders, which includes any operation that has violated Department of Natural Resources regulations six times during a 12-month period. The legislation also creates penalties including the revocation of operating permits. The bill increases monetary penalties for operations that violate air and water pollution regulations more than once during a 36-month period. A single violation in this time period could be cited with a fine of up to \$10,000 per day. Subsequent offenses in this same time period garner a surcharge of the subsequent violation's penalty plus all fines assessed for the prior violations. The funds from the increased fines will benefit Missouri by going into a newly created "Air Pollution Enforcement Fund," which will help finance public education efforts and air and water pollution enforcement.

Through SB 738, we can utilize modern agricultural practices while also keeping in mind the effects we have on the environment. In Southwest Missouri, concerns over CAFOs and animal part recycling companies are a big issue. I am aware that many in the 32nd District are concerned about the environmental effects of these companies because many residents deal with

them every day. For example, Carthage residents have repeatedly expressed concern over Renewable Environmental Solutions—a company that has been the center of much controversy due to an odor that was a nuisance for the community. The legal battle that followed these violations would not be necessary with the provisions of SB 738 in place.

Next week, SB 738 will be heard in the Agriculture, Conservation, Parks and Natural Resources Committee. The hearing will take place on Tuesday, February 5th at 3:00 p.m. It is important that we start holding repeat pollution offenders accountable and I look forward to continuing the discussion on the legislation this session.

*Senator Gary Nodler represents the people of Newton, Jasper
and Dade counties in the Missouri Senate.*