November 7, 2017

The Honorable Scott Bennett The Honorable Neil Anderson

218B Capitol Building M103D Capitol Building

Springfield, IL 62706 Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Sub-Chairman Bennett and Minority Spokesperson Anderson,

In the early 19th Century, Illinois was amongst one of the fastest growing states in the union. Immigrants from all over the world came to our state to work in our bustling factories and farmland jobs. Today, Illinois is one of three states that is losing population. In fact, Illinois is set to lose one to two seats in the United States Congress during the next reapportionment. While many Illinois metropolitan areas are losing population, rural areas are also experiencing this alarming trend.

Outmigration is having an adverse impact on the workforce in these rural areas. It impacts our small-town corner stores and service shops that keep these communities running. It blows a hole in local tax revenues that build the roads that connect communities and impacts the schools that teach these students.

While our state’s property tax system, high workers’ compensation rates and other business-related issues have forced many industry employers in rural Illinois to relocate to other states; Illinois’ agricultural sector continues to be one of the premier industries in the world for agricultural commodities, including livestock.

Billions of dollars flow into the state’s economy from our state’s agricultural sector. Illinois’ food manufacturers turn our state’s crops and livestock into food and industrial products at home and for abroad. Marketers market everything from agricultural commodities to the next generation of farm equipment. And as international markets for meat grow, Illinois livestock production will grow as well –adding more jobs and investment into these rural communities.

Like every state, Illinois has its share of problems. However, the agricultural industry is evidence of something that has continued to stand the test of time. By implementing unnecessary, costly and burdensome regulations on our state’s livestock farms, state government makes it much more difficult for our rural communities to prosper.

For the reasons stated above, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce urges members of the Subcommittee on Confined Animal Feeding Operations to reject any additional regulations that would adversely impact our state’s vital agricultural sector.

I appreciate your consideration, thank you for your time.

Sincerely yours,

Tyler Diers

Director of Legislative Relations

Illinois Chamber of Commerce