

**Subject:** Re: Proposed 2014 Site Selection GAAMP's  
**From:** S Miles (canc4miles@sbcglobal.net)  
**To:** wilcoxR2@michigan.gov;  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:42 PM



January 21, 2014

Via Email to: WilcoxR2@michigan.gov  
and First Class Mail

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development  
Environmental Stewardship Division  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Proposed amendment to Site Selection GAAMP'S

Dear Chairpersons:

I am writing in regards to proposed changes to the 2014 Site Selection GAAMP. I welcome the proposed Category 4 Site Selection; however, the Category 3 Site Selection does permit farming in a residential zoned district and, therefore, needs further revisions.

Specifically, in regards to Category 3, I propose additional language in bold underlined format as follows:

*Category 3 Sites: Sites generally not acceptable for new and expanding livestock production facilities.*

\*\*\*

*The following categories require minimum setback distances in order to be considered acceptable for construction of new livestock production facilities. In addition, review and approval **and authority** of expansion in these areas is required by the appropriate agency, as indicated.*

*1. Drinking Water Sources*

\*\*\*

*An expanding livestock production facility may be constructed with review and approval **and authority** by the local unit of government administering the Wellhead Protection Program.*

\*\*\*

*2. High public use areas*

\*\*\*

*The review process will include input from the local unit of government and from people*

who utilize those high public use areas within the 1,500 foot setback. **The local unit of government shall maintain authority.**

### 3. Proximity to Residential zones

\*\*\*

*Existing livestock production facilities may be expanded within 1,500 feet of areas zoned for residential use with approval **and authority** from the local unit of government.*

It is my opinion that the local unit of government maintains **authority** in a residential zoned district because GAAMP's is voluntary and there is no way for the MDA to enforce them. Lack of enforceability leaves the local unit of government and its residents to deal with consequences of a farmer who is not maintaining or in compliance with GAAMP's. Without the specific language allowing the local unit of government to maintain "authority" in its residential zoned district, it has been well established that the Right to Farm Act has created mass confusion throughout the State of Michigan as to who shall control a so called "black eyed farmer" who does not or will not comply with GAAMP's.

A farmer with knowledge and wisdom will purchase land in an agriculturally zoned district. The lack of MDA enforcement and/or the local unit of government's authority to control farming activities in a residential zoned district, which is generally accommodating hobby farmers, has cost our local units of government and innocent residential citizens thousands of dollars, created environmental and health hazards, and has left the judiciary system in an unwarranted uproar. A few simple added words of clarification can easily resolve these issues.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Sandra Miles  
2580 Gulliford Dr.  
Lowell, MI 49331

2580 Skull Island  
Snowell MI 49331

GRAND RAPIDS MI 494

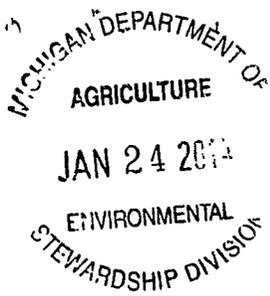
21 JAN 2014 PM 2:11



MT Dept of Ag  
PO Box 30814  
Dunwoody MT 48909  
attn: Mr. Wilcox

48909751717





**Jack Pyle**  
**2404 Harding Avenue**  
**Lansing MI 48910**

January 22, 2014

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Environmental Stewardship Division  
Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices under review

The proposed changes undermine the Michigan Right to Farm Act that was created to protect small farms in areas that are not zoned agricultural. The changes would prohibit keeping of any farm animals in any residential areas, which would mean no more backyard chickens.

I am strongly opposed to these changes because they are extremely detrimental to people's ability to be self-sufficient and produce their own food.

Sincerely,



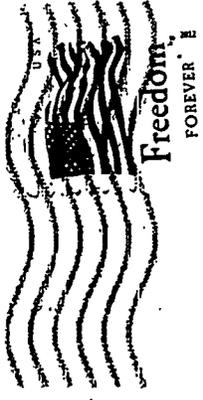
Jack Pyle



Mr. Jack Pyle  
2404 Harding Ave  
Lansing, MI 48910

GRAND RAPIDS MI 494

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ATTN: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP DIV.  
MICH. DEPT OF AG & RURAL DEV.  
BOX 30017  
LANSING MI 48909

48909751717





January 20, 2014

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Environmental Stewardship Division  
P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909

I just finished reading the article titled "No more farm animals in residential neighborhoods, Michigan agriculture committee advises", from Mlive, January 20, 2014. To say that I am appalled is an understatement. I am writing as very concerned Michigan resident that you would take away protections to any and all of us that now have or want to have in the future livestock on our property.

The article states that "Those rights are threatened by proposed changes to Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices (GAAMPs) currently under review by "first bring(ing) operations as small as a single animal under the control of the Site Selection GAAMPs," the alert warns, "and then using (a new category) to exclude those operations from Right to Farm protection in residential areas."".

I am a mother, a 4-H leader, and... a farmer. A farmer is someone who cultivates or grows something. The dictionary does not say that the land be a certain size. Raising any animal takes much responsibility and commitment. It is a life skill that many people in our society do not have because the opportunity has been and continues to be taken away. More importantly, the choice of how we want to raise our food or how our food raised would be taken away. If not allowed to raise our own food, whether it just be a few chickens for eggs or rabbits for meat. We become solely dependent on someone to do it for us and if there are no small farm operations left and then it is just big farms and production. Can you honestly say you will have a choice on how your food is raised, what it is fed, how it is housed and prepared?

Teaching my children and the 4-H youth the responsibility of caring for the animals they raise is part of growing nurturing adults. They are also becoming educated and knowledgeable in the species they raise. More importantly they know what their animals are raised for and are not ignorant nor dependent on the grocery store as their sole means of food. They have control of what they feed them how they care for and house them and they are responsible for the clean-up of those animals as well. They are also becoming businessmen and leaders, by keeping records of their animals and educating others about them. You have to learn about what you raise and there is no better way to learn than by doing.

My concern is also that where I live now is considered "rural", but what if the zoning changes? How will I be guaranteed that my "farm" can continue to be a farm? All it takes is for someone different than me to complain and I will have no "right to farm" any longer, for I will be regulated and not protected.

We take care of our animals and our environment. They go hand in hand. One doesn't thrive without the other. The benefits of "backyard farming" for our society and children far outweigh the "potential" environmental risks that a "backyard farm" would have.

Please do not change the protections that are in place.

God gave Adam and Eve and all the generations thereafter, to care for the earth, all the plants, and all the animals. He intended us to actually work and provide food for ourselves. Please do not limit our rights.

Colleen M. Burke

The Law Office of David G. Cox  
4240 Kendale Road  
Columbus, OH 43220  
614-457-5167  
[dcoxlaw@columbus.rr.com](mailto:dcoxlaw@columbus.rr.com)

January 21, 2014

Heather Throne  
Mich. Dept. of Ag. and Rural Development  
Environmental Stewardship Division  
P. O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Public comments on proposed changes to  
Site Selection and Odor Control GAAMPs

Dear Ms. Throne:

I am General Counsel for the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund, a non-profit organization that defends the rights and broadens the freedoms of family farms and protects consumer access to raw milk and other nutrient dense foods. The Fund currently has over 300 past and present members who reside in Michigan. This letter is being submitted on behalf of those members to provide comments on the proposed illegal change to the Site Selection and Odor Control GAAMP.

Specifically, MDARD and the Commission proposes to change the Site Selection and Odor Control GAAMP by adding a brand new "category 4" site, which is defined as a site that is "not acceptable" for new and expanding livestock facilities. A "category 4" site, which currently does not exist in the GAAMP, would include any property that is "exclusively zoned for residential use" such that confining livestock in these locations would "not conform to the Siting GAAMP." This proposed change is not only illegal, it is bad policy and not authorized by either the Governor's office or applicable law.

The proposed change violates applicable law because the Michigan Court of Appeals has repeatedly held that RTFA protections apply no matter where the farm is located, i.e., whether the farm is located in an area zoned residential, agricultural, or some mix thereof. For example, the following was stated in the case of *Papadelis v Troy*, No. 268920, 2006 WL 2683385 (Mich. Ct. App. Sept 19, 2006) (*rev'd on other grounds at* 478 Mich. 934; 733 N.W. 2d 397 (2007))

We are aware that...a business could conceivably move into an established residential neighborhood and start a farm or farm operation in contravention of local zoning ordinances as long as the farm or farm operation conforms to generally accepted agricultural and management practices. Although we

might personally disagree with the wisdom of the policy choice...we are without the authority to override the clearly expressed intent of the legislature.

And in the case of *Charter Township of Shelby v. Vikki Papesh and Martin Papesh, Jr*, 267 Mich. App. 92, 106; 704 N.W. 2d 92 (2005), the Michigan Court of Appeals stated following:

Although [the Township] argues that application of the RTFA under these circumstances will prevent local municipalities from 'getting their arms around' farms operating in existing or developing residential areas, the fact that the statute appears to be unwise or unfair to [the Township] is insufficient to permit judicial construction. The wisdom of a statute is for the determination of the Legislature, and the law must be enforced as written."

Thus, it is clear that the RTFA as currently written allows for urban agriculture, and any attempt by the Commission or the Department to circumvent the law via the adoption of a GAAMP that prohibits livestock in an area that is permitted under the RTFA would be illegal.

The proposed change would also be void *ab initio* as an *ultra vires* act because neither the Commission nor the Department are authorized to develop zoning ordinances. Rather, the authority to develop zoning ordinances is vested with local municipalities under the Michigan Zoning and Enabling Act, MCL 125.3101 *et seq.*

In addition, the proposed change violates the Governor's directive for the Department to develop an urban agriculture policy that enhances and promotes urban agriculture. During the September 2011 meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development (Commission), then-Director Keith Creagh stated that Michigan's Governor wanted "the department [to] develop an urban agricultural strategy" with a view toward "*enhancing and promoting* urban agriculture activities." Consequently, the proposed change to the Site Selection GAAMP is contrary to the Governor's wishes because it *fails* to enhance and promote urban agriculture; in fact the proposed change *prohibits* urban agriculture when it comes to livestock.

The proposed change would also be a waste of the Department's resources. During the September 2011 meeting of the Commission, then-Director Creagh concluded that if a GAAMP "were adopted for urban agriculture, the department would be required to resolve disputes, which *may not be the best utilization of its resources.*" Needless to say, the proposed change will increase the strain on the Department's resources because Department employees will be constantly subpoenaed for depositions and witness testimony at trial and hearing anytime an

urban farmer is sued by a local entity for allegedly being in violation of local zoning ordinances.<sup>1</sup>

The proposed change also violates the separation of powers doctrine because urban agriculture vis a' vis local zoning is an issue that should be addressed by the legislature. During the December 2012 meeting of the Commission, MDARD Director Jamie Clover Adams cautioned the Commission about developing an urban agriculture policy because *"the law is what governs what the GAAMP's can do."* Because of the tension between the protections afforded urban farmers under the RTFA and the desire of local entities to prohibit urban agriculture under the guise of "zoning," Director Adams suggested the Commission *"may need to approach our elected officials to make the policy choices on this issue."* Thus, the proposed change to the Site Selection GAAMP is bad policy and illegal because the legislature, not the Commission, should be tasked with this issue.<sup>2</sup>

The Commission's and the Department's attempts to prohibit urban agriculture has a long history. As long ago as September 2011, the Commission contemplated adopting an "urban agriculture policy statement." That statement included the following language:

*"... it is the policy of the Commission for Agriculture and Rural Development that a local unit of government may enact a land use zoning ordinance that extends or conflicts with existing GAAMP standards under very strict conditions."*

Those two conditions were whether the municipality had a population of 50,000 or more, and whether the municipality had established an "overlay zone" pursuant to applicable law. If the two conditions were satisfied, then the Commission and the Department would be sanctioning a "land use zoning ordinance that extends or conflicts with" the RTFA, a clear violation of law because the RTFA expressly provides that it preempts any conflicting local zoning ordinance.

Apparently, that September 2011 "policy statement" was not enough. In December 2011, the Commission modified all of its GAAMPs by including the following language: "This GAAMP does not apply in municipalities with a population of 100,000 or more in which a zoning ordinance has been enacted to allow for agriculture provided that the ordinance designates existing agricultural operations

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<sup>1</sup> Just in the last two years, the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund has defended at least four Michigan members in RTFA cases accused of violating local zoning ordinances. In addition, several more cases have made their way to the Courts even though the Fund was not involved.

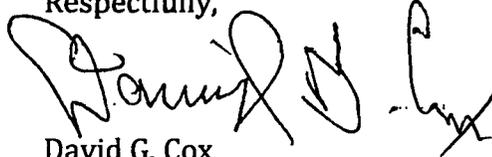
<sup>2</sup> Even the Michigan Farm Bureau would agree. In a letter dated August 22, 2012 to the Manager of the MDARD Right to Farm Program, the Farm Bureau states it is "concerned about applying the site selection GAAMP's to all farms regardless of size" because they were "concerned that unintended consequences may occur" if the definition of "livestock production facility" was changed to include any size farm, not just farms with more than 50 animal units.

present prior to the ordinance's adoption as legal non-conforming uses as identified by the Right to Farm Act for purposes of scale and type of agricultural use." And now the Commission and the Department wish to totally and completely eliminate urban agriculture with respect to livestock by creating a new "category 4."

Consequently, the proposed change to the Site Selection and Odor GAAMP is illegal, *ultra vires*, contrary to the Governor's wishes, a waste of the Department's (and taxpayers') resources, and a violation of the doctrine of separation of powers. For these reasons, the Fund and its members suggest the Commission and the Department reject the proposed change to the Site Selection GAAMP.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon, I remain,

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David G. Cox", written in a cursive style.

David G. Cox  
General Counsel  
Farm-to-Consumer  
Legal Defense Fund



The Law Office of David G. Cox  
 4240 Kendale Road  
 Columbus, OH 43220

COLUMBUS OH 432

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Arthur Throner  
 Miln. Dept. of Ag.  
 Env. Steward. Div.  
 P.O. Box 30017  
 Lansing, MI 48909

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## WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP

4990 ZIMMER ROAD  
WILLIAMSTON MI 48895  
PHONE: 517-655-3193



1/21/2014

MDARD  
Environmental Stewardship Division  
PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Members:

I am writing in support of the proposed changes in the GAAMP's for Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities.

Williamstown Township is a zoned community. More specifically, the Township has sixteen zones in total to accommodate many land uses. Zoning is valued for the quality of life and protection of living choices it affords residents by defining uses. For example, zones can define land as strictly residential, commercial agriculture, industrial or mobile home park zones allowing residents to choose how near or far they want to live from an industrial site, convenience store, farm animal, etc.. Zoning protects property values by keeping incompatible or unsuitable uses away from private property. Our township uses zoning to guide growth and development in harmony with current and future land use and to protect health, safety and home values.

Williamstown Township promotes and supports agriculture in areas zoned for agriculture. We also promote and support areas devoted to residential uses. Many of our residents do not support having farm animals located in the areas zoned strictly residential. For these reasons we support the proposed changes in the site selection regulations to allow areas to be zoned and not allow farm animals in that zone.

Thank you for your time spent working through the proposed changes and reviewing all of the input you will be receiving.

Sincerely,

Mickey S. Martin, Supervisor  
Williamstown Township

Williamstown Township  
4990 N. Zimmer Road  
Williamston, Michigan 48895

neopost  
01/21/2014

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

**US POSTAGE**

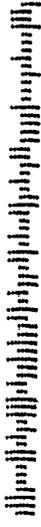
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Environmental Stewardship Division  
PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

48909751717



**WALNUT HILL FARM  
54180 DEQUINDRE ROAD  
SHELBY TOWNSHIP, MI 48316**



January 18, 2014

To: 2014 Draft Site Selection GAAMP Review Committee

Dr. Wendy Powers  
James Clift  
Michelle Crook  
Brian Culham  
Steve Davis, P.E.  
Sam Hines  
Larry Jones  
Steve Mahoney  
Gerald May  
Scott Miller  
Ken Nobis  
Scott Piggot, M.S.  
William Renn  
Wayne Whitman

Greetings to all members of the 2014 GAAMPs Review Committee.

I am writing to voice my objection to the language in the proposed 2014 Site Selection GAAMP pertaining to Category 4 sites. Categories 1, 2, and 3 are related both to density of nonfarm residences near the farm as well as number of animal units. The same should be true of Category 4, if defined. Without Category 4, the restrictions of Category 3 are a sufficient restriction as revised.

If altered, this definition would make our rural (no neighbors within 3/4 mile as the crow flies, approximately 200 residents in the entire 36 square mile township and 2/3 of the land is owned by the state) RESIDENTIAL 40 acres ineligible as a suitable place to keep a chicken, turkey, horse, steer. There is NO sound scientific basis in tying zoning to siting. A "residential" zoning does not mean that an area is suitable for constructing a residence, nor that it is inappropriate for other uses. It is merely an indication of potential land use. There are many more factors involved in siting than a tag on an assessor's map.

More time should be spent in considering what the objections are to the keeping of livestock in primarily residential areas. The keeping of animals, whether cat, dog, rabbit, horse, fowl, goat, sheep, cow or any other, should take into account several things: The ability of the site to support the health and welfare of the animal with protection from the elements, proper housing for the type of animal, provision of wholesome feed and water, protection from predators, prevention of vermin, and proper disposal of dead animals and animal waste without offense to immediate neighbors. The Animal Care and Manure Management GAAMPs address these concerns. Conformance with existing and well established scientific principles of livestock management is desirable. In fact, most small farmers provide far more than the published minimum guidelines supported by the state as good management guidelines, especially where floor space, lighting, and ventilation are concerned.

**WALNUT HILL FARM  
54180 DEQUINDRE ROAD  
SHELBY TOWNSHIP, MI 48316**

No one is promoting a 1000 bird broiler facility in a subdivision back yard. But the ability to keep half a dozen or a dozen hens for the purpose of selling eggs or breeding rare varieties, or raising a clutch of turkeys for market, or keeping a backyard goat for milk and cheese, should be within the ability of anyone who can properly provide the necessary living conditions and can properly care for the animals and maintain the facility so that it is not objectively harmful to those around it. We don't do this to shun society. We don't do this to buck laws. We certainly don't do this to get rich. We do this because we do not believe that the commercial alternatives are necessarily our best choice, and we believe that we can do better. And, based on public opinion (repeat sales), we do.

Those of us who are small producers don't consider that we are going to make much of an impact in the marketplace. All in all our products make up only a small percentage of the market. And I don't think any of us have the goal to price our products lower than the grocery store on these commodity items. What we offer is a unique product, direct from the source. The success of small farms in the local marketplace shows that some of the people of our state DO care about quality, sustainability, and other aspects that custom producers provide. All we ask is that our voice be heard even though we have no representation on the review committee.

The Michigan Right to Farm Act addresses commercial farm operations and it should apply equally to all commercial farms regardless of size or location. I am proud to be among those who have gone through our state court system to prove that the Michigan Right to Farm Act is a viable and valuable law for commercial farming operations. Michigan has a strong farming tradition and this tradition should be upheld, not only for major commercial producers, but also for promoters of genetic biodiversity, drug-free living for our food products, and participation in our food production chain as small family farmers have done for centuries.

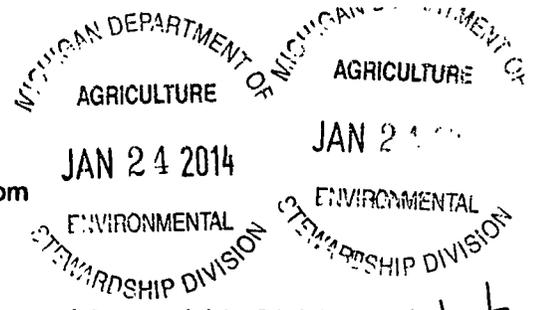
Yours truly,



Vikki Papesh

# Kori Jock

1016 Homecrest Ave. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001 | (248)830.0843 | korieljock@hotmail.com



Rhonda Wilcox

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Environmental Stewardship Division

P.O. Box 30017

Lansing, MI 48909

*Rhonda - I had originally emailed this letter on 1/20 but wanted to send a hard copy as I needed to print one for Gov. Snyder. Thank you! Kori*

Hello Rhonda,

I was shocked and disappointed to learn that Michigan might be banning small backyard flocks in residential areas, per the proposed changes to Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices (GAAMPs) currently under review. Particularly, the part where "...operations as small as a single animal" could be brought "...under the control of the Site Selection GAAMPs". This coupled with the creation of a new category for residential zoning, would spell the end of our small flock, just as it was getting off its feet.

I recently moved back to Michigan from Seattle, where I spent four years - my late twenties. In Seattle, I was thrilled to chicken sit for friends and loved fresh eggs from our neighbors and co-workers. There are no roosters allowed in city limits; all you ever heard were the gentle clucks of hens scavenging in a back yard (traffic was usually louder). Seattle is much more densely populated than anywhere in Michigan, and through city ordinances, back yard farming is respected as a way to supplement expensive city living, foster community, and improve gardens and the owners' health (you know what your chickens have been eating, how they've been raised, and their eggs are more nutritious than store bought *source: <http://motherearthnews.com/eggs.aspx>*).

We rented in Seattle, and while renters often had chickens and coops (with their landlords' approval), our property didn't have a yard. This is part of the reason my husband and I were so excited to buy a home with a fenced in yard in a city in Michigan that allows chickens (Kalamazoo; we lived in Wyandotte briefly and their not allowing chickens in city limits was part of the reason we left).

So much of Michigan's current work surrounds getting young people to stay, to come back, and to raise families here. To create jobs. To spend their hard earned dollars in the State.

I am a small business owner, and my husband works remotely for a large, 20+ year old creative tech company. I am originally from White Lake, but my husband has never lived in Michigan before. We consciously moved to Michigan to bring our salaries here (reverse brain drain), to put our money in the local economy, to create jobs, and to live our values. Our values include local food (we are vehement supporters of farmers markets and small businesses), and fostering community. What could be more local than food raised in your back yard? What is more community oriented than sharing abundant fresh eggs with your neighbors?

How will Michigan remain competitive when cities and states on the west coast don't waste their time threatening simple, community oriented living? Why would we want to stay, with our small business and tech job? Both bring in money from the rest of country which we consciously put it into the local economy (just last night I emailed a local bookstore owner a link to a book I wanted from Seattle-based Amazon.com, and asked if they could get it for me). My husband posted to his facebook page, "Dear Michigan friends, if you can take a moment to sign this petition and contact MDARD (Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) regarding proposed changes that would outlaw our backyard chicken coop, I'd really appreciate it. Seriously, if Seattle can

coexist with backyard chicken coops, I'm sure Michigan can continue to allow it to happen. Seattle can't possibly be better than Michigan at everything, let's help continue to keep it an "even" comparison here. Also, sign it or I'm taking Kori Jock away from you (just kidding, kind of)."

It's kind of in jest, but kind of not. We are the kind of people you want in this State. Chicken people are the kind of people you want in Michigan.

I urge you to continue allowing backyard flocks.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Kori Jock

cc: Governor Rick Snyder, Senator Tanya Schuitmaker, and Representative Sean McCann

For Jill  
1016 Homecrest Ave.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

GRAND RAPIDS MI 49504

22 JAN 2019 PM 3 L



Rhonda Wilcox  
MI Dept. of Agriculture + Rural Development  
Environmental Stewardship Division

PO BOX 3007

48303 EASTING, MI  
48303 EASTING, MI

JAN 24 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

January 22, 2014

To MDARD's Environmental Stewardship Division,

It recently came to my attention that you have proposed changes to Michigan's Generally Accepted Agricultural Practices (GAAMPs). As I understand, the two projected changes are as follows:

- 1) First, the regulation of small farms, whereby he who should raise even one animal is in no way allowed to do so without state regulation.
- 2) And second, the creation of category 4 sites which would deny all those living in residential zones the right to raise farm animals.

I, a seventeen-year-old Michigan resident, am concerned. As an American citizen I take seriously my responsibility of participating in a government that is "of the people." And so, when I heard of the proposed changes, it made me think, "Where would I be today had I not grown up on a small farm most of my life?" Responsibility, know-how, attention to detail, work ethic, and a conscious effort to maintain humane conditions for the animals under my care was merely prerequisite. And I ask myself, would I have learned these lessons had I never lived on a small farm, had I spent those countless chore hours sitting in front of a TV? No, dear friends, I am afraid that had I spent my time in front of a TV or gaming console instead of working on our small farm, I would today be merely another lazy, removed from reality, "average" teenager. I say all this on behalf of Michigan residents, rural and urban. Please do not regulate small farms. We, as American citizens see it as our right to farm without oppressive interference, for such is un-American. It is a slap in the face of liberty, the shock of which will affect us all, if we are prevented from farming freely, using our good ol' common sense upon our own land as we work as stewards of the land and animals under our care. So please, do not regulate small farms, or create

Category 4 sites lest in doing so, you rob us of our right to "pursue happiness" and also create a generation of young, lazy, irresponsible Americans prone to crime and unequipped for life. Stand for justice, fight for our liberty, do what's right and you will never regret it. Fight for us farmers and the upcoming generation. In doing so you maintain our respect. Thank you. I know that you will stand with us.

Sincerely,

Cole Peterson

15890 Farro Rd.

Chassell, MT 49916

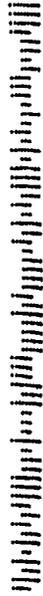
Cole Peterson  
15890 Torro Rd.  
Chassell, MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498

22 JAN 2014 PM 1 L



MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
Division  
PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
JAN 24 2014

The Environmental Stewardship Division

Shiloah Peterson  
15890 Torro Rd  
Chassell, MI 49916  
1-22-2014

MDARD'S

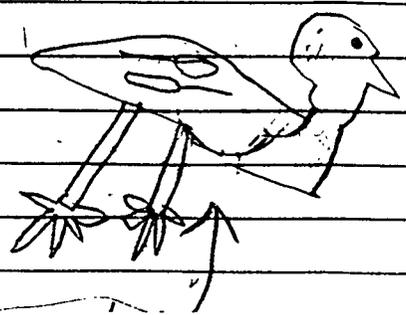
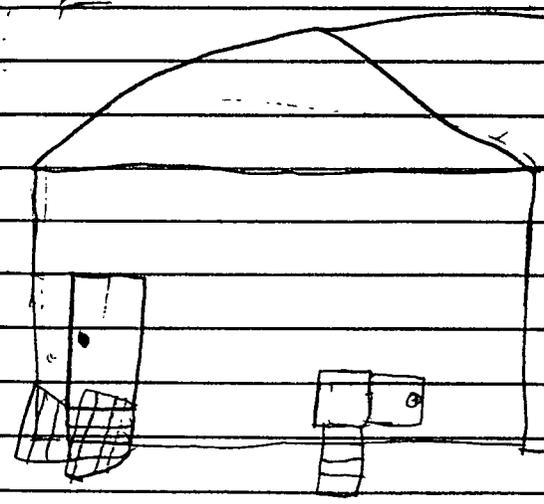
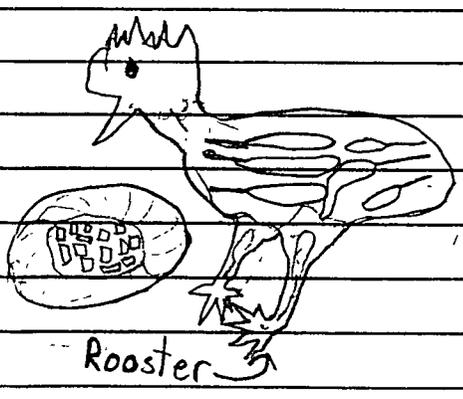
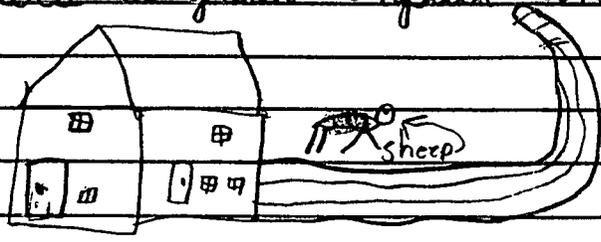
ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

old

Hello, my name is Shiloah Peterson. I am 9 years old. We live on a small but nice farm. We have chickens.

Can you please not regulate small family farms? My experience with chickens is that they are awesome for laying eggs and for supplying meat. Over the few years of having a small farm, teaches responsibility and a lot of learning.

I strongly believe that having a farm does a great impact in life.



from  
Shiloah

Shiloah Peterson  
15890 Torro Rd.  
Chassell, MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498

22 JAN 2014 PM 1 L



MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
Division

PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE

JAN 24 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

15890 Torro Rd.  
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January 22, 2014

MDARD's Environmental Stewardship Division  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

To Whom it may concern,

I have recently learned of proposed changes to Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices, specifically bringing operations as small as one animal under its control and prohibiting farm animals from being raised in residential areas.

As I consider these changes, my mind floods with thoughts: being raised on a small hobby farm where we had a milk cow which I occasionally milked by hand, spending time on my uncle's large-scale dairy farm where I helped hand-feed the small calves, visiting a suburban family who kept chickens for enjoyment and egg production and wholesome responsibility for their young children, growing into adulthood where for a period of time I missed and began to long for the richness of keeping some farm animals, and then to finally being able to raise some animals for our own enjoyment and richness, teaching our own children to be stewards of animals and nature, while they learn more about science and responsibility. We want our children to become responsible adults and see that the responsibility of animal care-giving provides a strong basis for this.

So, my request is this: please do not regulate small farms, which will create roadblocks for healthy learning and enjoyment. Please do not prohibit farm animals in residential areas.

Most of our many friends and family members care deeply for the well-being of their animals, the environment,

and courtesy to their neighbors. In my experience, possessing a few farm animals does not hamper these relationships, but rather has grown us and others in awareness, caring, and responsibility.

If there are problems in these areas, may I suggest education as a means to bring about change rather than regulation? Many of our friends, and my own family as well, love to learn how we can better manage our animals and the environment.

Additionally, raising one's own animals is a great hedge against poverty and hunger. Who is not concerned ~~with~~ with the world's problems of poverty and hunger? Let the small farms continue, unregulated, even in residential areas! Our young people will benefit!

Respectfully, and for good stewardship,

Maria Peterson

Wlaria Peterson  
15890 Torro Rd.  
Chassell, MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498

22 JAN 2014 PM 1 L



MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
Division

PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909



JAN 24 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

Wednesday, January 22, 2013

MDARD's Environmental Stewardship

Division,

I'm a thirteen-year-old boy that has raised chickens for a couple of years. When raising chickens, it produces responsibility, and animal management skills.

Outlawing small farms from raising as much as a single animal that is not under control of the Site Selection GAAMPs, doesn't give folk the freedom they deserve.

Please give people in cities and towns the Right to raise chickens, which creates Responsibility.

Sincerely,

Spencer Peterson

15890 Torro Rd.

Chassell, MI 49916

~~Spencer Peterson~~  
15890 Torro Rd.  
Chassell MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498



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MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Division



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE

JAN 24 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

15890 Torro Rd.

Chassell, MI 49916

January 22, 2014

MDARD's Environmental Stewardship Division

P.O. Box 30017

Lansing, MI 48909

To: The Environmental Stewardship Division:

As a concerned eighteen-year-old Michigan resident, I write to you in regards to the proposal that Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices would be altered. If the proposed changes are approved, biodiversity and financial problems may ensue as well as an infringement upon the liberties and happiness of Michigan residents.

How would biodiversity be harmed? Regulating small farms in residential zones could potentially rule out biodiversity within the state of Michigan, encouraging the extinction of various endangered species, such as those which the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy works to protect. Small farms within residential areas help to save these struggling breeds.

By fighting these motions and allowing families living in residential areas to raise farm animals, the state employs the usage of a magnificent poverty-fighting tool. How? Well, the ability to raise animals helps financially-struggling families like mine be able to reduce our ever-increasing grocery bills by eating fresh eggs and hormone-free meat and dairy. Also, kids raised on farms are apt to become more responsible, harder working adults who earn good livings, thus avoiding poverty and crime. → over

I understand that some regulation is necessary, but by regulating small farmers, the State would harm our society, our environment, and most importantly, the liberties on which this great nation was founded.

I want my future children and grandchildren to enjoy the richness and happiness of raising animals in residential zones without being supervised or prohibited from farming on a small scale by GAAMP's.

Please protect the rights of residential farmers to own animals without being controlled by the Site Selection GAAMP's. Also, please protect residential farmers under their Right to Farm. And finally, please don't create Category 4 sites.

Thank you very much for your time!

Yours Respectfully,

Ariel Peterson

Ariel Peterson

Ariel Peterson

15890 Torro Rd  
Chassell, MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 4993

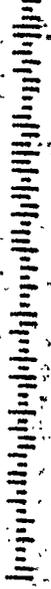
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MDARD's Environmental Stewardship Division

P.O. Box 30017

Lansing, MI 48909



JAN 24 2014

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP DIVISION

15890 Torro Rd.  
Chassell, MI 49916  
January 22, 2014

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's  
Environmental Stewardship Division  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

To Whom It May Concern:

One of the unalienable characteristics of the U.S. of A. is its desire, above all else, to pursue liberty and bequeath freedom to its citizens and their posterity. This nation has universally been known to extend freedom as a right each American possesses free of restrictions.

And so, I write to you now because—as a citizen of this country—I hold a responsibility to protect liberty and take a bold stand for it. Benjamin Franklin charged us, "Sell not virtue to purchase wealth, nor liberty to purchase power."

And yet an infringement of freedom stands imminent which will foment an unwarrantable extirpation of the once pervaded freedom. This infringement is none other than the regulation being contemplated that could well terminate the exercise of small farms and their expedient care of livestock and poultry.

Naturally, an agriculturalistic culture should, rather than slipping over the brink of extinction, flourish and be blessed by the government and its affiliations. Oh, the foreboding barranness of a nation whose youth is abridged the

chance to experience raising farm animals! The life of a farmer transcends in responsibility and general skills the trite boredom of his antithesis counterpart—the city dweller. Not to stereotype the city dweller as living a useless life—no. But the experience and richness of the agriculturalist's life is, by general means, surpassing in most other lifestyles.

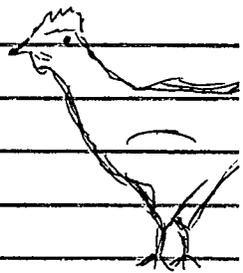
I myself am a fifteen-year-old girl who lived with animals in my backyard for precedent and present times. But there was a time years ago, when my family happened to be without the apprising culture of farm animals. During that time I missed farm life and strongly desired the chance to explore a barn or catch a large, egg-laying hen. I desiderated the felicity of gathering fresh, brown eggs and joyously watching tiny, yellow chicks.

We now keep a farm once more and I still enjoy it. Whether it's a cheerful rooster crowing in the distance or hungry chickens hurrying to the fence to receive kitchen scraps or ducks flinging water over their backs to wash—farm life is deeply enjoyed.

So please, do not underscore the American heritage of farming by eradicating the very fiber of our national existence. I petition you today to revert regulations aimed hobby farms. It brings me sorrow to foresee the possibility of small family farms extemporaneous and our perpetual heritage abridged. So please, do not pull asunder small farms, be them on residential or country land. I implore you to preserve the practice of the contemporary American farmer and stand for their rights and freedoms today as well as forever. Let's stand together now for liberty--and the farmer!

Sincerely,  
Chantal Peterson

Chantal Peterson



~~Chassell~~ Peterson  
15890 Tomo Rd. IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498  
Chassell, MI 49916 22 JAN 2014 PM 1 L



MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
Division

PO Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

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15890 Torre Rd  
Chassell, Md 49916  
January 22, 2014

To MDARD's Environmental Stewardship Division,

I am an eleven-year-old girl who takes care of chickens, ducks and geese. In the morning I get them food and water, and in the evening I bring the eggs in the house to get washed. In winter evening I bring the water in the basement to thaw. Also on Saturdays I clean the chicken coop. Our family enjoys eating fresh eggs.

Can you not outlaw raising animals on residential land? By me and my brothers raising chickens my parents say that it will make us responsible adults.

Taking away our right to have farms causes us to rely on the stores and if the store shuts down, what do you think; should we starve?

Please don't regulate having animals on small farms.

From,

Camilla Peterson

Camilla Peterson  
15890 Torre Rd.  
Chassell, MI 49916

IRON MOUNTAIN MI 498

22 JAN 2014 PM 1 L



MDARD's Environmental Stewardship  
Division

PO Box 30017  
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