

20 MR. CARLIN: Thank you very much. I
21 think we have Susanna Brinnon here now, is that
22 correct? Susanna? If you were here earlier, my
23 apologies.
24 MS. BRINNON: No, I had to go and come
25 back, thank you.

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1 MR. CARLIN: Okay.
2 MS. BRINNON: I wish I had something to
3 say as May Belle does. I do have some positive
4 things but I think they're just not in this
5 statement. My name is Susanna Brinnon and I
6 represent myself. I believe you probably heard
7 during these hearings many statistics and stories
8 about the treatment of animals in family farming.
9 I would like to speak to another level of the effects
10 of family farming because probably few people will
11 speak of this and that is, for lack of a better word,
12 the effects of these facilities on the energy of our
13 society.
14 By energy, I mean the collective
15 intelligence and psyche of the individuals in our
16 society. I'd like to separate my presentation into
17 the affect on three groups, the animals
18 themselves, the general populace including
19 children and adults and the workers in family
20 farming establishments.
21 First, it is very easy for many people to
22 dismiss the effects of industrial farm animal
23 facilities on the animals themselves. If it were our
24 cats, our dogs, our horse, we could more easily see
25 that the chemicals, steroids and hormones

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1 administered not to mention the crowded
2 conditions and inhumane treatment are torture.
3 But because we have grown up in a world where we
4 are increasingly separate from our food production
5 we are able to except what we kind of know but
6 don't really want to know, sure that if it was really
7 inhumane the government would not allow it or our
8 parents wouldn't have done it or some such.
9 Unfortunately, such ignorance of what
10 goes on in our name will eventually haunt us and I
11 am not speaking of the inevitable affect on our
12 bodies of consuming steroids and such in our food
13 but on the affect of our collective psyche. I
14 believe we cannot forever ignore the cruelty that
15 goes on in our industrial farm facilities without
16 grave consequences to our spirit as human beings.
17 I believe that our children are growing up

18 accepting such a high level of violence that we are
19 in for serious trouble as a culture. How else can
20 we explain the children who are taking up arms
21 and killing those around them? This new
22 phenomenon in our country must be understood as
23 a reflection of our casualness regarding violence
24 on TV, in movies, in the Middle East, everywhere,
25 including the unseen violence in the heart of our

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1 culture, the industry where our food is produced.
2 This is my second point that it is true
3 that a culture is measured by how it treats its
4 weakest members and I do not remember who said
5 that. Was it Albert Einstein who originated that
6 marvelous quote? In applying this perspective to
7 our culture, we would look at our treatment of the
8 elderly, of the sick, of minorities, of women, and
9 finally our treatment of animals, especially those
10 in factory farms. And unfortunately, if we are
11 honest with ourselves, we must acknowledge that
12 we fall short in every category.

13 We must examine the spiritual heritage we
14 are leaving for our children. Just as we have
15 preferred not to notice the warnings of global
16 warming, we must examine for the sake of our own
17 collective spirit what societal conditions we except
18 in order to continue our lifestyles and our
19 preferences.

20 And third, the effect on those who are
21 employed in factory farms who do the dirty work
22 for us. I work at the state office of unemployment
23 and as you know, poultry farms and poultry
24 production plants are among the largest employers
25 in northwest Arkansas. Many people come here to

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1 work in this industry. I'm very sorry to say that if
2 I had not been a vegetarian before this job, I
3 surely would become one. The stories I have heard
4 about the jobs these people are required to do are
5 quite shameful. What often goes down the
6 production line is quite scary, not to mention the
7 effect on these humans who must every day
8 participate in throwing live animals around among
9 many other questionable activities.

10 We want to eat these animals and so once
11 again we prefer to remain uninformed about what
12 is required of those who bring our food to our
13 table. I did not mention these workers in the list
14 of how we treat those least fortunate in our
15 culture; however, we surely will be called to

16 answer some day for our lack of awareness of their
17 deplorable working conditions. I hope we will look
18 into our hearts and reexamine our priorities while
19 we still have hearts left to do it with.

20 MR. CARLIN: Questions? Thank you very
21 much for your statement.

22 MS. BRINNON: Thank you.