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10 MR. CARLIN: While Mr. Teague is coming
11 up, I would remind commission members that
12 unless you tip your little name deal up, I can't tell
13 if you're interested or not in asking questions.
14 Evan?

15 MR. TEAGUE: Yes, sir.

16 MR. CARLIN: You're on.

17 MR. TEAGUE: Thank you. My name is
18 Evan Teague. I'm the environmental specialist for
19 the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation. On behalf
20 of the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, I would
21 like to express our appreciation to the commission
22 for the opportunity to address you here today
23 about Arkansas's economy, animal agriculture and
24 environmental stewardship. Just to give you an
25 idea about the Farm Bureau, we represent over

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1 230,000 member families in the state and in the
2 counties you toured yesterday, Benton and
3 Washington. We have over almost 16,000 member
4 families in those two counties alone.

5 Arkansas's agricultural complex is the
6 largest industry in the state. It represents almost
7 25 percent of the state's total economy.
8 Contribution of Arkansas's agriculture to the
9 state's economy is higher than that of any other
10 state in the nation.

11 It's nearly one in four Arkansans are
12 employed in the ag sector representing either the
13 farm input center on the farm or either in the
14 production, marketing, or distribution of food or
15 farm products. Overall, Arkansas is still the 11th
16 largest state in the country in the value of annual
17 farm production with annual cash receipts
18 approaching about \$7 billion. Arkansas's farm
19 sector is predominantly animal oriented and it's
20 two thirds of the state's annual farm production
21 value is generated by the poultry, livestock,
22 aquaculture and dairy industries. Over half of
23 that -- or fully half of that is generated by the
24 poultry industry alone. Benton and Washington
25 counties are the state's highest ranking animal

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1 agriculture and counties. Also in the nation,
2 these two counties are ranked 25th of 34
3 nationally in value of agricultural farm
4 production. So as you can see, agriculture in
5 general and also animal agriculture are crucial to
6 this region and also to the state.

7 Arkansas has positioned itself ahead of
8 the EPA and many the other states through its
9 regulatory programs. Arkansas regulatory
10 agencies are more proactive than many other
11 states throughout the nation. We have two
12 agencies that regulate animal agriculture, that
13 being the Arkansas Department of Environmental
14 Quality and the Arkansas Natural Resources
15 Commission.

16 Arkansas was one of the first states to
17 adopt regulations managing liquid animal waste.
18 Back in May of 1990, then Governor Bill Clinton
19 commissioned the governor's task force on animal
20 waste. The task force findings resulted in the
21 adoption of ADEQ, the Department of
22 Environmental Quality Regulation 5. This
23 regulation requires that all producers of liquid
24 animal waste obtain permits and then all of these
25 individuals holding permits receive annual

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1 training on the management and care of animal
2 waste. Regulation 5, this regulation allows animal
3 waste to be used in a beneficial manner while at
4 the same time protecting the environment.

5 In 2003 the Arkansas state legislature
6 passed the laws creating Arkansas's nutrient
7 management plan rule. They codified this law Title
8 22. Title 22 designated counties in Northwest
9 Arkansas including Benton and Washington as
10 nutrient surplus areas as you heard from a
11 previous speaker. What these laws require is that
12 anyone applying nutrients or any land owner
13 applying nutrients in a nutrient surplus area must
14 obtain a nutrient management plan before applying
15 nutrients including raw poultry litter and
16 commercial fertilizer. It's not just slanted to
17 litter but also pertains to fertilizer in this
18 regulation. These nutrient management plans are
19 some of the most stringent in the United States
20 due to the fact that their nutrient application
21 limits are phosphorous-based. You first check for
22 phosphorus, then you go to other nutrients.

23 The University of Arkansas Division of
24 Agricultural along with the Biological and
25 Agricultural Engineering Department have

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1 exceptional research staff who are nationally and
2 internationally recognized as some the preeminent
3 experts regarding water quality and watershed,
4 water quality modeling, stream ecology and

5 nutrient transport, particularly as it relates to
6 phosphorus.

7 The division recently established the
8 Watershed Research and Education Center. The
9 creation of this center serves as an example of the
10 divisions in agriculture to continue innovation
11 addressing water quality issues and watershed
12 issues also.

13 More along the lines of Farm Bureau's
14 activities, in 2003 the Arkansas Farm Bureau
15 Federation delegate body recognized the need for
16 and approved the policy that created the very
17 position that I hold today, environmental
18 specialist. At the same time it created the
19 Environmental Issues Committee.

20 In 2004 the federation began including an
21 environmental issues conference as part of its
22 series of special farming conferences in the state
23 and the convention. Between the committee and
24 the conferences, our members have been educated
25 on a variety of subjects including environmental

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1 regulations, developing partnerships, agronomic
2 and environmental management of phosphorus.

3 Our members in Northwest Arkansas
4 participated in the formation of a new watershed
5 group called the Illinois River Watershed
6 Partnership. The partnership has brought together
7 Arkansans and Oklahomans to discuss and address
8 water quality issues. Even though still in its
9 infancy, its showing promise to addressing water
10 quality issues in Northwest Arkansas and
11 Northeast Oklahoma. One example is the
12 possibility that a proposal submitted by the
13 partnership will be accepted and be selected as
14 one of the EPA's target watershed grants.

15 During the 2006 Arkansas Farm Bureau
16 annual meeting, our membership approved new
17 policies that support the transportation of excess
18 litter out of nutrient surplus areas.

19 Arkansas House Bill 1318 entitled the
20 Nutrient Surplus Removal Incentive Act is an
21 economically and environmentally proactive
22 program that was adopted and supported by our
23 Farm Bureau members.

24 Again, I thank the commission for the
25 opportunity to comment on the importance of

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1 animal agriculture to this state and the proactive
2 efforts made by -- towards environmental water

3 quality and protection made by our regulatory
4 agencies, our research staff and agricultural
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