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House of Representatives State of Tennessee

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March 20, 2012

Kevin Daley, Chairman
Michigan House Agriculture Committee
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
KevinDaley@house.mi.gov

Dear Representative Daley:

I have been closely following with interest and great concern the actions taken by the Department of Natural Resources in your state regarding the implementation of an Invasive Species Order (ISO) that purports to single out specie of swine by phenotype as illegal. I wanted to let you know I strongly believe this is a very dangerous precedent that if this order is actually implemented by your state, could potentially have wide-spread negative consequences to agriculture in other states.

When I first learned about the Michigan DNR attempting to implement a regulation to prohibit ownership of certain swine living under human husbandry, I didn't believe it. I did not think it was even possible for a state DNR to have the statutory authority to govern privately owned livestock. However, I have since learned that the Michigan DNR has published a Declaratory Ruling listing certain characteristics of swine that apparently will be treated as "*Invasive Species*" in the State of Michigan.

In the State of Tennessee, and I am sure this must be true in your state; agriculture is very diverse and important industry. Those making a living at it must not only work hard, they must also be smart and innovative. Raising specialty breeds of animals, even developing hunting preserve operations providing an opportunity for people to harvest animals themselves, are very important to our agricultural economy especially when not everyone is able to farm on a large scale.

I sincerely believe the actions taken by your DNR not only threaten innovative specialty farm operations in Michigan, but by your states example and published Invasive Specie Order and Declaratory Ruling, it will also needlessly facilitate debate and possible negative consequences

for agriculture in other states by questioning what breeds of animals can be raised, how they are raised and what method of harvest farms choose to utilize.

I would like to ask you and your colleagues in the Michigan Legislature to aggressively and immediately call for the repeal of the Michigan DNR's Invasive Species Order. I would also recommend that the Michigan Legislature as quickly as possible remove whatever authority the Department of Natural Resource has to govern farm animals.

If I can help in any way, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Niceley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "y".

Rep. Frank Niceley
Tennessee House Agriculture Committee Chairman
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