



Interstate Commodities, inc.

GRAIN AND FEED INGREDIENTS

February 5, 2009

Chairman Meyer, Chairman Roy and Members of Environmental Committee

My name is Victor Oberting and I am Chairman of Interstate Commodities, Inc. located near Albany, New York. I would like to take this opportunity to speak in opposition to Raised Bill 5811 referring to placing restrictions on cage size for caged layers in Connecticut.

Interstate Commodities is a supplier of rail grain and grain products to Kofkoff Egg Farms and the Southern New England Egg operation located in the towns of Bozrah, Franklin, Lebanon, and Colchester. Through diligent and resourceful effort over many years Kofkoff and Southern New England Egg have grown into a major supplier of quality food not only to Connecticut consumers but also to the eastern United States. It is my understanding that there are over 300 jobs and \$185,000 in local taxes alone paid by Kofkoff and Southern New England Egg to the Town of Bozrah. Restricting caged layers in Connecticut would effectively shut down these operations in the town of Bozrah which would result in a large reduction in jobs and tax revenue as well as significant implications with regard to loss of business by the New England Central Railroad which is an important transportation asset and employer in southern Connecticut. Interstate Commodities ships over 2000 rail cars on this railroad annually to Franklin. Since this volume of business is well over 50% of the rail volume to Southern Connecticut, there is no doubt that the New England Central Railroad would either shut down operations on the rail line south of Palmer, MA to New London, CT or severely curtail service which would impact the economies of those remaining Connecticut rail users.

Interstate Commodities is a nationwide supplier to the poultry industry. It is our considered opinion that any attempt to enact a caged layer policy would immediately result in shutdown of these Connecticut production facilities. The Connecticut market would no doubt continue to be supplied from sources outside of the state at a significantly higher cost to the Connecticut consumer. Since United States cage free operations today are so minute at ½ to 1% of national production, most Connecticut consumers would not be able to afford the cost of eggs in their diet. There would no doubt be considerable transportation and shopping one way or the other for eggs from neighboring states of New York, Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island.

I would urge the members of the Environmental Committee to recognize the value of the poultry industry in the State of Connecticut and the damaging ramifications of attempting to convert Kofkoff Egg Farm and Southern New England Egg from their present day high quality United Egg Producers Certified Program scientifically developed for the care of chickens all into a free range production process. In our opinion, this would be a definite step backward for the state of Connecticut for all the reasons outlined in this statement.

Respectfully submitted:

Victor A. Oberting, Jr.
Chairman, Interstate Commodities, Inc.

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