

Trump Administration Undermine Key Environmental Laws

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The Trump Administration has worked to undermine our key environmental laws and Congress is attempting to pass a deeply flawed farm bill, but at the state level we've actually seen some BIG WINS on issues related to factory farms in 2018! Legislators spent the first months of the year working on a number of issues –

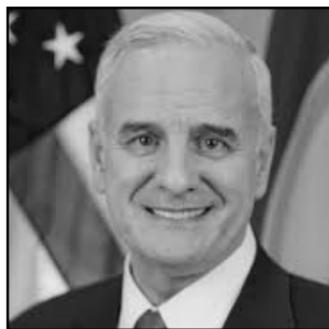
Here's our Round Up of 2018: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly, and the Solutions

Let's walk through what happened in some key states:

Minnesota

GOOD

Democracy wins in Minnesota!



Thanks to Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton

Legislators introduced a bill that could have allowed organizations and people to be charged with a crime simply for promoting or supporting an event where a trespass or damage happened... guilt by association. The bill had the American Legislative Exchange Council's (ALEC) fingerprints all over it. Minnesota has a long history of citizen and farmer-led protests, including those that swept across the state during the 1980's farm crisis, and as a result family farm advocates were outraged. The bill

passed the legislature but after enormous citizen outcry, Gov. Dayton vetoed it— an big win for democracy! (Note: ALEC is currently shopping this bill to states around the country.)

- **In Minnesota, 40% of lakes and streams are contaminated with pollution from fertilizer and is present in more than 8,000 drinking water wells.** It's terrible, and yet legislators sought to remove the Department of Agriculture's authority to limit the use of polluting nitrogen fertilizer. The Governor issued a letter to the legislature in the final days of session indicating he would not sign any bill that included this provision, but the legislature passed it anyway! But, then, in a strong win for science, clean water and democracy, Governor Dayton vetoed it immediately!

Missouri

GOOD



In Missouri, two bills proposing to strip local communities of their right to have a say in permitting factory farms were introduced. One sought to limit the authority of local county commissions to impose setbacks on factory farms sprayfields. The bill had strong industry support, but in part due to strong opposition from groups like Missouri Rural Crisis Center, it stalled out at the end of session!

BAD

The second bill proposed stripping local communities of their right to enact ordinances to address the labeling, cultivation, or use of seeds or fer-

tilizer. This is another bill that reeks of ALEC influence, and in fact, Texas passed a very similar measure last year. This kind of bill would limit local governments from enacting bans or restrictions on the cultivation of GMO seeds or regulate practices like manure spreading. This bill ultimately passed, likely also due to deep involvement from industry.

Iowa

BAD

- Iowa passed on an opportunity to begin the hard work on cleaning up its polluted waterways (nearly 800 in total) by enacting a new law funding existing voluntary water quality programs with state revenue. The bill didn't include measures like Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement had been lobbying for: a comprehensive statewide monitoring strategy, goals for improving water quality, or even a provision to make polluter pay for these initiatives. It was essentially a talking point that legislators can use in stump speeches, and it won't result in any meaningful measures to address water pollution in Iowa. Unfortunately, Governor Kim Reynolds signed it into law.



- Legislation proposing a moratorium on new and expanded factory farms was introduced in both the Iowa Senate and House. Both bills died in subcommittee— the Senate version after the chair of the subcommittee, **Ken Rozenboom, allegedly refused to even bring it to debate.** (This is the same Rozenboom who describes himself as a life long farmer and agri-businessman.)

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Maryland Community Healthy Air Act Legislation to Study Air Emissions from Industrial Animal Farms FAILED to Pass

photo source: Fairfarms.org

Maryland

BAD

- **Maryland Senator Richard Madaleno reintroduced the Community Healthy Air Act (CHAA) in that state's 2018 session.** This critically important piece of legislation would have required the Maryland Dept. of Environment (MDE) to monitor air emissions from industrial factory farms in Maryland and to assess their impact on public health. While hearings were held in both Senate and House, the bill ultimately failed to pass.

North Carolina

UGLY

- Last year, North Carolina enacted a law restricting the rights of citizens to bring nuisance lawsuits against factory farms (despite massive citizen outcry, the legislature overrode the Governor's veto to enact this legislation.) And it's no surprise that the NC General Assembly went a step further this year. In response to recent ground breaking victories for plaintiffs suing factory farms for nuisance in the courtroom, legislators introduced a bill declaring factory farms

are not a nuisance at all – a change that could completely eliminate people's right to sue the factory farm next door for lost property values or other harms.

- This is an egregious attack on private property rights and North Carolina's most vulnerable communities in order to shield a single corporation - Smithfield Foods, - from being held responsible for its filth. The bill passed easily in the General Assembly where Republicans hold a supermajority in both chambers. The Governor vetoed the bill but the General Assembly, in pledging allegiance to Smithfield, overrode his veto. Until these terrible laws are repealed, the type of ground breaking lawsuits holding Smithfield accountable for destroying its neighbors's lives will not be possible in the future in North Carolina.

LOOKING FORWARD

In this legislative session there were some important victories but also some hard fought losses. Corporate influence in our political system is one of the biggest threats to our food

water and environment. Legislators in several states heard that loud and clear from their constituents this past session. Dozens of powerful grassroots groups and thousands of citizens mobilized against corporate influence and for the basic tenants of our democracy. Some good bills died in committee, but had exciting grassroots support and momentum behind their introductions – setting us up for more wins next year. These victories showed that when we stand together we can win.

We will continue to work with our state and local partners over the coming months to prepare for 2019.

- We will hold public officials accountable and expose them when they pander to Big Ag.

- We'll run bold campaigns to overhaul our food system, starting with getting rid of factory farms.

- As we fight to build a democracy that works for everyone.