

Thank you chairman Blake and members of the committee.

My name is Sheila Thompson Poe and I own a dry land wheat farm in Franklin County. My family has operated this farm for almost 100 years. I am here speaking on behalf of the Five Corners Family farm group, a non-profit corporation representing 20 family farms. We are neighbors who have come together in opposition to a proposed confined animal feeding operation that would radically change our farming community.

The region where our farms are located receive the lowest rainfall of virtually any area in the State.

Our Columbia Basin Groundwater Management Area group is a voluntary local planning effort to reduce nitrates in groundwater. This month the group released a study about the future of the aquifers that we depend on for our livelihood. The study had three key findings: (1) There is no groundwater connection to Lake Roosevelt, so water from the lake is not recharging our local aquifers; (2) most deep wells are pumping water that is ten thousand years old; and (3) water level records show that ground water mining is causing many wells to decline faster than they can naturally recharge.

The proposed CAFO would bring 30,000 head of cattle into our dryland wheat farming region, and the developer proposes doing so without a water permit or regulatory oversight. Yet in one day this new development would use as much water as the rest of the Five Corners Farms would use in one year—combined. The Franklin County Planning Commission and the County Commissioners have provided conditional approval for this new development despite what we believe are grave consequences. Water use proposed is 1.5 to 3 million gallons per day.

Given this background, we oppose House Bills 1489 and 1509. Both would broaden the interpretation of stock watering to include not just water the animals drink but also a host of other uses. This would open the door for industrial animal feedlots across the state.

In closing I would like to ask the committee to support the Department of Ecology in securing water resources not only for our generation but for generations to come. Poor planning surrounding the Odessa aquifer has now placed that community in a situation where it may need to pump water from the Columbia River to meet its current needs. I don't want that to happen in our community or any community. I would urge you to wait and not vote to pass one of these bills

today so we have time to thoroughly research these issues. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.