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My name is Anthony Herzog. I am chairman of the Board of Wayne County Commissioners. On behalf of my fellow Commissioners and all the people of Wayne County, I would like to thank the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee for holding this listening session today in Wayne County and truly bringing our State Government to the Agricultural and rural part of Pennsylvania.

The challenges that face each area of the Commonwealth are unique and I commend you for giving the citizens who are directly and indirectly affected by decisions made by this committee the opportunity to make you aware of the issues in our county.

The Wayne County Commissioners are gravely concerned over the difficult financial times our dairy farmers are having primarily because of low milk prices and the high cost of production. We urge you to assist our farmers in anyway possible to improve the pricing policy in Pennsylvania and give the milk producers a fair share of the prices paid by the consumer. Farm families cannot survive on the revenue available from today's milk marketing system. Wayne County is not only losing dairy farms as a business, we are losing a way of life. I am sure you will hear considerably more today on this issue and I will allow others to give you more details in their remarks.

Another important rural issue in Wayne County and indeed in most of Northeastern Pennsylvania is a major problem with debris blocking our waterways after several years of major storms and flooding at unprecedented levels.

Many rural streams and creeks contain fallen trees, stumps, roots and wood that clearly need to be removed. This material has been up rooted and randomly deposited down stream by disastrous flooding events in September of 2004, April of 2005 and June of 2006.

As a board member of the Wayne Conservation District I can assure you that many areas that have significant blockage have been identified, sources of funding have been researched but little or no help for property owners has been discovered. This debris clearly threatens our bridges, dams, roads and homes. If we get more flooding and this loose material obstructs the normal flow of our waterways, even more local and state infrastructure will be lost. Many people feel that the damage from the last storm was compounded by loose trees and brush lodging against bridges. The water then backed up until the bridge gave way or the water found another outlet around the blockage resulting in damaged roads, sluice pipes, loss of crops and valuable farm land.

We respectfully request that you look into any assistance that might be available to correct this situation. Some preventive clearing and cleaning of waterways now, might pay big dividends in the future by minimizing losses to infrastructure and reduce property damage and as well as insuring increased public health and safety.

Again I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today and I hope the results of today's listening session will provide valuable insight as to the concerns of Wayne County and Rural Northeastern Pennsylvania.