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Testimony presented by Margaret Herring (34386 Colorado Lake Drive, Poncha Springs, CO)

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I wish to speak to the matter of undue burden and reasons to deny this proposal outright.

This proposed landfill expansion puts undue burden on the residents of Benton County, and beyond, currently and for years to come. And yet, any discussion of that burden has not been allowed within the narrow limits of these public hearings and within the extraordinarily lopsided restrictions from the county's legal counsel.

Committee Chair Nicholas Fowler asked the pointed question: when state and federal agencies responsible for environmental oversight, are not living up to those responsibilities, doesn't that put an undue burden on county government?

And when a county government is already short-staffed and unable to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts, doesn't that put an undue burden on county citizens?

And when county staff are advised to dismiss evidence collected by citizens from credible public sources (such as the EPA) as merely "anecdotal" because that evidence has not been tested in court, doesn't that put an undue burden on these hearings to fairly consider the facts at hand?

The evidence provided by the citizens of Benton County during public hearings in April provided far more verifiable, expert evidence than the selective self-reporting presented by Republic Services.

Why would Benton County commissioners choose to place layers of undue burden on their citizens by permitting this unwise and unwanted and apparently unregulated expansion, *when we have little or no capacity to monitor and regulate an expanding source of toxic pollution that reaches far beyond what we can see or smell.*

Whatever short-term windfall of money the county might receive from this deal will not cover the enormous and undue burden the citizens of Benton County face now and will face when this landfill eventually closes and requires an expensive environmental cleanup.

In summary: The restrictions put on this staff report have forced a narrow conversation on the immediate intrusion of odor and noise, and have dismissed broader concerns about air quality and water quality as merely "anecdotal."

This decision by the county staff is an insult to the citizens who have provided credible, verifiable, and incriminating evidence of the toxicity of this landfill and the expanding threat of its expansion. This proposal cannot be fixed by a smokescreen of conditions. I urge county leaders to protect the future of Benton County and reject this proposal outright.