



## **Press Advisory**

March 23, 2017

### **POINTED QUESTIONS FOR OEPA's DEPUTY DIRECTOR, KARL GEBHARDT**

This evening at 6:00 pm at UT's Lake Erie Center, 6200 Bayshore Rd., in Oregon, the International Joint Commission will hold one of only [six public meetings](#) in the entire Great Lakes region.

Karl Gebhardt, Deputy Director of the Ohio EPA, will be one of the presenters.

I plan to ask Mr. Gebhardt the following two questions re: the manure-based excess nutrients feeding the harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie every summer.

As a member of the [IJC's Water Quality Board](#), the Executive Director of the [Ohio Lake Erie Commission](#) and most relevantly, [Deputy Director of the Ohio EPA](#) responsible for coordinating efforts to deal with harmful algae's impact on Lake Erie, would you be willing to

- 1) [draft legislation requiring manure be applied at the same agronomic rate as commercial fertilizer](#) and
- 2) [use the skills you learned as a 19-year lobbyist for the Ohio Farm Bureau to lobby the legislature for passage of those regulations along with enough funds to conscientiously enforce them?](#)

To date, public officials and academics have been reluctant to identify the role manure plays in the poisoning of Lake Erie, even though just the [140+ registered CAFOs](#) (concentrated animal feeding operations) in the Western Lake Erie Basin generate as much feces, urine and pathogens as the combined output of Chicago and Los Angeles every year. The number of CAFOs just under the size needed to register is unknown.

This flood of waste is spread, completely untreated, on fields that drain into Lake Erie.

Legally holding manure to the standard recommended for commercial fertilizer when applied to fields would reduce the Phosphorus hot spots and over-saturation with Phosphorus that is washed into the lake with spring thaws and heavy rain events.

CAFO operators and their trade groups, like the Ohio Farm Bureau, consistently insist that voluntary measures can adequately reduce Phosphorus levels.

Before being appointed to his current position with the Ohio EPA Mr. Gebhardt was employed as a lobbyist for the Ohio Farm Bureau for 19 years and was a registered lobbyist for at least two years for Vreba-Hoff, Inc., the company that pioneered dairy CAFOs in NW Ohio.

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