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SECRETARY

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89 Kings Highway
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To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is written in support of the proposed anaerobic digester at the Bioenergy Innovation Center located in Sussex County, with a permit hearing on October 26.

The Delaware Nutrient Commission voices its support of this project as we believe that the proposed implementations at this site of transforming organic materials, such as the byproducts of chicken processing, into renewable energy and a virtually odorless soil amendment is a great tool to help in achieving our goals of protecting the environment on the Delmarva Peninsula, and greater Chesapeake Bay region.

The Seaford facility has a 20-year history in Sussex County, first starting as a pelletizing plant and now as an operating compost facility. It is currently permitted to accept the same material as requested in the permits now before the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. We have been pleased to see that they have taken part in numerous community events offered to provide residents with a better understanding of the process.

Anaerobic digesters are a proven tool – Germany alone has more than 9,000 – focused on the management of waste without the use of landfills or land application with the goal of protecting natural resources and the environment. Here are just a few of the ways anaerobic digestion could contribute to sustainability, the environment, and the economy:

- **Waste management:** Anaerobic digestion will do a superior job at managing what is known as dissolved air flotation, or output of poultry processing, hatchery, and litter. Most of the byproducts of poultry processing end up in landfills, open-air tanks, or land-applied, all of which pose challenges to our air and water quality as well as soil health. Instead, this facility provides Delaware's agriculture and chicken industry a way to manage this material efficiently and sustainably in an enclosed and monitored environment.
- **Soil health:** Anaerobic digestion significantly reduces the risk of waste material ending up in watersheds like the Nanticoke as it breaks down nutrients from raw feedstocks creating a valued product that promotes overall soil health

The digestate created in the anaerobic digestion process is pathogen-free and provides local farmers with a fossil-free soil product, removing the challenges of leaching into our watershed while providing needed nutrients to soils and crops.

Simply, healthy soils naturally manage nutrients more effectively – which results in lower runoff and higher nutrient absorption by crops and plants, which can contribute to enhanced yields and higher quality soils.

At the Nutrient Management Commission, we do not take these endorsements lightly, but it's clear that the Bioenergy Innovation Center's history, experience, and proposed commitment to the environment provide a unique opportunity to enhance the management of environmental issues already featured in the state.

We believe that anaerobic digestion technology will be a quality support tool for the poultry, agriculture, and Sussex County communities, both in creating economic opportunity and helping ensure environmental quality.

Sincerely,



Michael T. Scuse

Secretary, Delaware Department of Agriculture



F. Kenneth Blessing

Nutrient Management Commission Chair