

Republican Leadership Fails Iowa Farmers by Jonas Magram

Last week, state Republican leadership turned its back on Iowa farmers by refusing to advance a bill designed to protect farmers from eminent domain abuse.

The bill, SF2106, introduced by Republican State Senator Jeff Taylor, would have prohibited private companies from seizing land from Iowa farmers for private gain, as Energy Transfer Partners did when it built the Bakken pipeline. But Commerce Committee Chair, Jason Schultz, also a Republican, made sure the bill was not brought to a vote.

The objections of farmers to eminent domain goes far beyond the well-documented damage pipelines cause to their tiling, soil, and yields. It is an oppressive violation of the sovereignty of their land ownership, a fundamental American right, as sacred to them as free speech or the right to bear arms.

Why was the bill not advanced? As is too often the case, Republican leadership placed the interests of private corporations, like those intent on building the Summit and Navigator CO2 pipelines, above the rights of ordinary citizens.

Apparently these legislators believe they can trash the rights of farmers and still get their votes. I guess only time will tell.