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(SD)-Livestock Development Initiative "State-Sanctioned Bribery"

By: John Axtell Posted at: 06/11/2019 11:20 PM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - A South Dakota initiative to promote livestock development by offering counties tax rebates for approving large cattle operations. is being criticized as state-sanctioned bribery.

The initiative allows developers of a concentrated animal feeding operation, known as a CAFO, to assign sales and tax rebates to a county government if local officials approve a conditional use permit for their project - deals that could bring counties hundreds of thousands of dollars each time.

Former Democratic legislator Kathy Tyler is a member of the grassroots group Dakota Rural Action and says it's hard to see the proposed program as anything other than bribery because concerns about noise, odors and environmental damage from a CAFO might be too easy to overlook by county officials eager for the revenue.