

Statement of Mike McMillan

I would like to address the recent allegations that have been reported by some news media concerning animals at my home in East Knox County and thank everyone for the overwhelming love and support so many people have expressed.

I've never intentionally abused or mistreated an animal in my life. My cattle were no exception. Many of them were named, considered my pets, and the loss of any one of them fills me with sadness.

In the last three years, I've been successfully treated first for throat cancer and later, lung cancer. Thank God, I am currently cancer-free.

In the last year, I've also had to try and do what I can to help my long-time companion, Teresa, who has had to move into an assisted living facility. Teresa seems to be doing better but with both of us having health issues, it's been a struggle to maintain everything the way I have in the past. I don't suppose it will surprise anybody that the family farm, which has been in my family for generations, has great sentimental and emotional value to me.

Even though I've had less help with the farm and with the weight of my cancer treatment regimen, I have only missed one meeting of the Board of Education and that was when I was in the hospital. My service on the Board of Education means a great deal to me and at times was the thing that kept me going during dark days.

Unlike what has been reported, I never said I starved or didn't feed my cattle. What I said was they were being fed by my farm hand instead of by myself. I did the best I could, but I am making no excuses.

I know I can still serve the people of my district. I have contracted with a local livestock auction company and my cattle will be sold. I am currently in the hospital being treated for the flu and pneumonia. I have made these decisions because they are best for the cattle and for me, too.

I am very grateful for the expressions of goodwill from many friends. I expect to be out of the hospital sometime soon and appreciate the support of folks all across the district.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike".

Mike McMillan