

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

It's been brought to our attention that America is losing its ranches at an alarming rate. We must act now to protect our food supply. Food security is national security.

We, the undersigned elected legislators from our respective states, care deeply about the well-being and preservation of America's independent cattle producers. American agriculture is the bedrock of the US economy. In our elected capacities as state legislators, we are uniquely positioned to know first-hand the grassroots challenges independent family producers face in today's highly concentrated and persistently dysfunctional cattle market.

As state legislators we closely represent our producers' interests. We desire to firmly stand on the matters of accountability. When our constituents' livelihoods are not being properly represented by a mandatory beef checkoff program that has taxed them for 35-years without giving them an opportunity to express where those "advertising" dollars go, the system is broken. This tax was voted on in 1985 under the auspices that the money raised would go to promote exclusively USA beef. Unfortunately, that money is being funneled away from its original intent and is being used by private associations and entities that do not exclusively represent USA beef.

Why is a federally mandated tax going to support and promote foreign beef as well as private entities?

Our domestic producers are paying USA dollars, raising USA cattle, and should have the basic protection of the original intent of this Beef Checkoff program.

Our state's cattle producers deserve to advertise their own exclusive product with a checkoff that's working for them, not against them.

It's time to sunset this program and give this new generation of producers the opportunity to vote on whether they want the Beef Checkoff program to continue.

Secretary Vilsack, please call for an immediate referendum of the Beef Checkoff program and allow our producers a voice in their industry.

Please contact any one of us if we can assist you in this important matter.

Respectfully,

KANSAS

State Representative Tatum Lee, District 117
State Representative Trevor Jacobs, District 4
State Representative Dennis Highberger, District 46
State Representative Joe Seiwert, District 101
State Representative Chuck Smith, District 3
State Representative Lance Neelly, District 42
State Representative Brett Fairchild, District 113
State Representative Mike Murphy, District 114
State Representative Ken Collins, District 2
State Representative Cheryl Helmer, District 79
State Representative Samantha Poetter, District 6
State Representative Tom Kessler, District 96
State Representative Tim Johnson, District 38
State Representative Steven Johnson, District 108
State Representative Eric Smith, District 76
State Representative Jesse Borjon, District 52
State Representative Mike Houser, District 1
State Representative Stephanie Clayton, District 9
State Representative Pam Curtis, District 32
State Representative Jo Ella Hoye, District 17
State Representative Tom Sawyer, District 95
State Representative Brandon Woodard, District 30
State Representative Charlotte Esau, District 14
State Representative Mark Samsel, District 5
State Representative Virgil Weigel, District 56
State Representative Lindsay Vaughn, District 22
State Representative Tory Marie Arnberger, District 112
State Representative Adam Thomas, District 26
State Representative Carl Turner, District 28
State Representative Pat Proctor, District 41
State Representative Louis Ruiz, District 31
State Representative Paul Waggoner, District 101
State Representative Vic Miller, District 58
State Representative Jim Gartner, District 53
State Representative John Alcala, District 57
State Representative Doug Blex, District 12
State Representative Ron Ellis, District 47
State Representative Ken Corbet, District 54
State Representative Clark Sanders, District 69
State Representative Kathy Wolfe Moore, District 36
State Representative Sydney Carlin, District 66
State Representative Mike Amyx, District 45
State Representative Jerry Stogsdill, District 21
State Representative Henry Helgerson, District 83
State Representative John Toplikar, District 15
State Representative Brian Bergkamp, District 93
State Representative Les Mason, District 73
State Representative David French, District 40
State Representative Bill Rhiley, District 80
State Representative Russ Jennings, District 122
State Representative Randy Garber, District 62

KANSAS

State Senator Alicia Straub, District 33
State Senator Oletha Faust Goudeau, District 29
State Senator Larry Alley, District 32
State Senator Molly Baumgardner, District 37
State Senator JR Claeys, District 24
State Senator Renee Erickson, District 30
State Senator Michael Fagg, District 14
State Senator Beverly Gossage, District 9
State Senator Richard Hildebrand, District 13
State Senator Mike Peterson, District 28
State Senator Mark Steffen, District 34
State Senator Gene Sullentrop, District 27
State Senator Mike Thompson, District 10
State Senator Richard Wilborn, District 35

OKLAHOMA

State Representative JJ Humphrey, District 19
State Representative Todd Russ, District 55
State Representative Tammy Townley, District 48
State Representative Sean Roberts, District 36
State Representative Mike Dobrinski, District 59
State Representative Mark Lawson, District 30
State Representative David Smith, District 18
State Representative John Talley , District 33
State Representative Anthony Moore, District 57
State Representative Max Wolfley District 95
State Representative Bob Culver, District 4
State Representative Kevin McDugle, District 12
State Representative Rusty Cornwell, District 6
State Representative Danny Williams, District 28
State Representative Sherri Conley, District 20
State Representative Rande Worthen, District 64
State Representative Mike Osburn, District 81
State Representative Ryan Martinez, District 39
State Representative Gerrid Kendrix, District 52
State Representative Jay Stegall, District 43
State Representative Carl Newton, District 58
State Representative Robert Manger, District 101
State Senator Rob Standridge, District 15
State Senator Roland Pederson, District 19
State Senator Marty Quinn, District 2
State Senator Warren Hamilton, District 7
State Senator David Bullard, District 6

SOUTH DAKOTA

State Representative Liz May, District 27

WYOMING

State Representative Hans Hunt, District 2
State Representative Chip Neiman, District 1

WYOMING

State Representative Jamie Flitner, District 26
State Senator Ogden Driskill, Majority Floor Leader, District 1
State Senator Cheri Steinmetz, District 3
State Senator Brian Boner, Chairman of Agriculture District 2

GEORGIA

State Representative Jason Ridley, District 6

UTAH

State Representative Paul Ray, District 13
State Representative Mike Schultz, Majority Whip, District 12
State Representative Carl Albrecht, District 70
State Representative Christine Watkins, District 69
State Representative Karianne Lisonbee, District 14
State Representative Steve Waldrip, District 8
State Representative Dan Johnson, District 4
State Representative Matt Gwynn, District 29
State Senator Scott Sandal, District 17

ARKANSAS

State Representative DeAnn Vaught, District 4
State Representative Mary Bentley, District 73
State Representative Jon S. Eubanks, District 74
State Representative Marcus E. Richmond, District 21
State Representative Bruce Coleman, District 81
State Representative David Hillman, District 13
State Senator Gary Stubblefield, District 6
State Senator Mat Pitsch, District 8
State Senator Terry Rice, District 9
State Senator Ricky Hill, District 29
State Senator Ron Caldwell, District 23
Lieutenant Governor, Tim Griffin

COLORADO

State Representative Richard Holtorf, District 64

NORTH DAKOTA

State Representative Dick Anderson, District 6
State Representative Sebastian Ertelt, District 26
State Representative Kathy Skroch, District 26
State Representative Austen Schauer, District 13
State Representative Rick Becker, District 7
State Representative Jeff Magrum, District 28
State Senator Michael Wobbema, District 24

CALIFORNIA

State Senator Shannon Grove, District 16

MISSOURI

State Senator Mike Moon, District 29