

June 5, 2007

Lee Robbins  
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Honorable Congresswomen and Congressmen,

I am Lee Robbins, a 4th generation cow calf producer from Yates Center, Kansas. I am a director for the Kansas Cattlemen's Association and a USD 366 school board member. Thank you for the opportunity to share with you some of my concerns about the beef business.

My biggest challenges are not with the production of beef, because I know I can compete very well as a producer. But instead, my challenges lie in the market place.

Previous rules by USDA have been detrimental to rural economies. I am convinced that the 4 major packers control USDA whenever a meat issue is at stake. For example, USDA not allowing Creek Stone Farms to individually test cattle for BSE for export to the Southeast Asia market as they had requested. The demand there is huge. Our best USA beef is cheaper on their retail shelves than their own locally produced beef.

Kansas State University did a study after loosing our export markets to SE Asia and estimated it cost us 14-15% of our beef's value. In 2006, Kansas's value of beef production was \$2,971,488,000.00 x 14% loss = \$416,008,000.00 has lost income to Kansas producers. The loss in Kansas income tax = \$416,008,000.00 x 6% average paid by producers = \$24,960,000.00 in lost state income taxes in 2006 alone. If you take the producers loss of \$416,008,000.00 times an economic multiplier of 5, and then \$2,080,040,000.00 was lost to our economies. These figures are just for 2006 in Kansas. Imagine the loss to all USA producers and economies. In private business customers dictate what they will purchase, not the sellers. Recently a judge ruled in favor of Creek Stone Farms for individual testing and USDA says it is going to appeal so that it still will not be allowed. Simply put, it's not about economics because a \$50.00 test yields approximately \$150.00 increase in value.

Another recent example of USDA working against me as a producer is USDA trying to tie mandatory identification to COOL. A simple hot iron brand will suffice for COOL identification and cost producers very little. Individual I.D. would be much more expensive to producers is hard to implicate and would stop COOL in the long run. Just as

the packers have told USDA to do. Our beef customers and producers want Mandatory COOL implemented in USA and deserve to get what they want, whether here or overseas. So please support Mandatory COOL. Current law prohibits I.D. use as verification for COOL, so please do not let it happen. It is unnecessary and unintended.

Captive supplies by packers depress live cattle prices. As captive supplies go up, live cattle prices go down. Without the use of captive supplies, packers will still have the same volume of cattle available to them as before. They would just have to bid on them in a true live market place. I would encourage you to support legislation that limits captive supplies by meat packers because it will improve producer's profits.

Let me state in closing that consolidation and vertical integration has not been good in general for production agriculture and rural economies. If we stay on the same trail as we have been on then rural America will suffer even more. We must make some changes to improve producer's profits. I am not alone in my thoughts and opinions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lee Robbins".

Lee Robbins

Committee on Agriculture

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Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Information Required From Non-governmental Witnesses

House rules require non-governmental witnesses to provide their resume or biographical sketch prior to testifying. If you do not have a resume or biographical sketch available, please complete this form.

1. Name: Lee Robbins
2. Business Address: 1181 Highway 54  
Yates Center, Ks. 66783
3. Business Phone Number: 620-625-3628
4. Organization you represent: Kansas Cattlemens Assoc
5. Please list any occupational, employment, or work-related experience you have which add to your qualification to provide testimony before the Committee:  
Independent Cattle Producer
6. Please list any special training, education, or professional experience you have which add to your qualifications to provide testimony before the Committee:  
B. S. Animal Science K.S.U. 1981
7. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list the capacity in which you are representing that organization, including any offices or elected positions you hold:  
Director

PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM OR YOUR BIOGRAPHY TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.

Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Required Witness Disclosure Form

House Rules\* require nongovernmental witnesses to disclose the amount and source of Federal grants received since October 1, 2004.

Name: Lee Robbins

Address: 1181 Highway 54, Yates Center, Ks. 66783

Telephone: 620-625-3628

Organization you represent (if any): Kansas Cattlemens Assoc.

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract. House Rules do **NOT** require disclosure of federal payments to individuals, such as Social Security or Medicare benefits, farm program payments, or assistance to agricultural producers:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) the organization has received since October 1, 2004, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if this form is NOT applicable to you: X

Signature: Lee Robbins

\* Rule XI, clause 2(g)(4) of the U.S. House of Representatives provides: *Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof. In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by any entity represented by the witness.*

PLEASE ATTACH DISCLOSURE FORM TO EACH COPY OF TESTIMONY.