

06/26/2003 Entry: "Kansas Cattlemen's Association Disappointed with Decision"

Washington, DC-The Kansas Cattlemen's Association (KCA) is disappointed to hear that the House Appropriations Committee has passed a bill that cuts funding for the implementation of country of origin labeling (COOL) for meats and meat products. The bill will now travel to the House floor for debate and a vote.

"Today's vote by the Appropriations Committee is terribly disheartening," says KCA President Larry Brack of Leoti. "We are disappointed that Representative Bonilla along with the rest of the Appropriations committee, including our own Representative Tiaht, has sold out cow-calf producers and feeders across Kansas, as well as consumers to the more concentrated segments of the cattle feeding and meat packing industry."

Funding for COOL came into jeopardy recently when Representative Henry Bonilla (R-TX), chairman of the House Appropriations Sub-committee on Agriculture introduced legislation that read "None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this act shall be used to propose or issue rules, regulations, decrees, or orders for the purpose of implementation or in preparation for implementation of country of origin labeling for meat or meat products." Bonilla's legislation passed out of the subcommittee on a voice vote before traveling to the House Appropriations Committee for passage.

The sub-committee vote set off a barrage of phone calls, emails and faxes to Appropriations Committee members from COOL supporters across the United States urging them to vote against Congressman Bonilla's bill. KCA commends those who contacted committee members to show their support for COOL and encourages them to keep up the good work.

"COOL was passed in the farm bill because U.S. Producers and consumers contacted Washington, DC and told their legislators to get it done. It's obvious that the fight is a long ways from over. We need to contact our legislators again and drive home the message that we want country of origin labeling on fruits, vegetables, peanuts, fish and meats and we want it now!"

The Kansas Cattlemen's Association encourages its members and consumers to contact Kansas Legislators in Washington, DC immediately to show support for keeping country of origin labeling intact.

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Ashlea Redding
877-694-2906
aredding@st-tel.net