



NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

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June 18, 2009

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Lucas:

After careful consideration, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association has decided to oppose the "American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009," H.R. 2454. We are extremely concerned about the substantial predicted increases in energy and other costs of doing business that may result from the bill; a weak offsets section; and the fact that producers have not had adequate time to fully analyze the very real and significant effects the voluminous bill would have on their businesses.

NCBA members are responsible environmental stewards who respect and care for the land, air, water, and animals that are fundamental to sustaining their way of life. Our members are very concerned, however, about the effects this bill could have on the costs of fuel, electricity, feed, fertilizer, equipment, and other inputs necessary to maintain a cattle operation. Economists have estimated that H.R. 2454 would cause farm income to drop anywhere from \$8 billion in the short term to \$50 billion long term. The cattle industry has suffered significant economic setbacks lately, and if these estimates are close to being accurate, this bill would very likely push many operations over the edge. NCBA simply cannot support a bill that would cause this kind of economic devastation.

In addition, the agriculture industry has received assurances all along that we would be able to increase income by generating offsets to sell to regulated sectors of the economy. H.R. 2454 does not provide any assurances that agriculture offsets would be able to be generated for this purpose.

Finally, there has not been adequate time to sift through the voluminous bill and understand all the effects it could have not only on the cattle industry, but on the U.S. economy as a whole. When Congress considers a bill of this magnitude and economic importance, we believe careful analysis and deliberation is essential. We urge Congress to slow down the process, carefully analyze the bill, and make sure society fully understands the significance of these actions before moving forward. Action on this legislation without sufficient forethought and careful consideration could be economically devastating.

Cattle producers will continue to work every day to protect and improve the environment so that they and future generations will be able to continue to live off the land and feed our nation, but NCBA must oppose any bill that could cause financial ruin to our members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Voogt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Voogt
President