

02-05-2020

Chairman Dominique Jackson
House committee on Energy and Environment
State of Colorado

Chairman Jackson, members of the committee, my name is Kenny Rogers. I am a 4th generation farmer and rancher from Yuma, Colorado. I am representing both the Colorado Livestock Assn, and the Colorado Cattlemen's Assn. My apologies for not appearing in person for you to provide testimony on HB20-1117, Misbranding Non meat and Imported and Artificial Meat.

This is calving season for many ranchers. Due to the recent bad weather I've had to spend several sleep deprived nights closely watching the cows as they calve to prevent hypothermia in the newborn calves. Knock on wood, even with several being born I've not lost any but it does mean lots of time "living among them". Today (beginning last night) I left my house shortly before midnight and finally around 1:00 PM could stop and eat a meal before returning to the herd.

To my point, I urge the committee to vote no on this bill. There are many states pondering similar regulations, and to prevent a hodgepodge of intrastate rules and regulations of improperly labeled fake meats, this is really a nationwide issue which deserves a federal solution.

Having the federal government sort out jurisdiction with USDA and the FDA being the responsible overseers would be the prudent action to allow to happen. Having each state draft their own version of labeling these products would be disastrous. We need to allow things to play out on the federal level and provide input through the various trade groups who have a dog in this fight.

Regarding the Country of Origin Label portion of this bill, this has been brought up before and has each time been shown to be a concept that on its face sounds good, but when you begin looking at it has many more negatives than positives.

To begin with, this is also an issue which should not and cannot succeed on a state by state basis. Imagine the structure required to transport from state to state labeled products, if each state has their own set of rules and regulations. Then there is the issue of verification, each beef carcass is broken down into so many different cuts, each requiring an accompanying verification form.

After all this occurs, there would be more paper forms than actual beef. Not to mention if Colorado producers have to go through the verification process and other states don't, then our Colorado producers are placed into a competitive disadvantage with these other states producers.

The CLA and CCA are in favor of a nationwide program which is voluntary, meets all requirements of international trade agreements, and bottom line, is not overly cumbersome and costly to producers. After all, the whole intent of having a so called value added marketing program is to allow for the possibility of increasing revenue for producers.

Thank you for considering my testimony of casting a no vote of HB20-1117.

Kenny Rogers
Yuma, Colorado