

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

Yesterday, the Department of Agriculture announced the withdrawal of two rules related to Packers and Stockyards Act commonly referred to as "GIPSA rules." We vehemently disagree with that decision.

The lack of economic opportunities in rural America creates real challenges for growth and economic development. For the economy in rural America to prosper, people who live, work, and invest there must be able to survive and thrive so they can reinvest earnings into their communities. That is the most effective way to create additional jobs and lasting opportunities for the next generation.

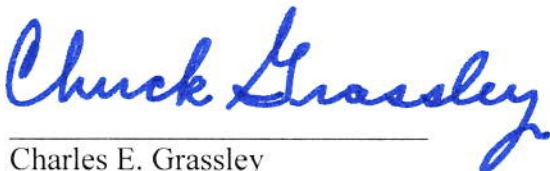
Many of our constituents believe the current practices of multi-national livestock corporations, one of which is being investigated for unprecedented corruption, allow them to exploit farmers and ranchers. The industry has consolidated for decades into its current structure that enables a handful of companies to have extraordinary market power.

Recognizing that fact, Congress intentionally instructed the Secretary of Agriculture to promulgate new rules in the 2008 Farm Bill to ensure a better functioning marketplace for farmers and ranchers in the livestock and poultry industry.

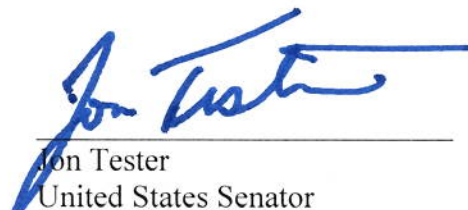
The proposed rule regarding *Poultry Grower Ranking Systems* should be finalized and implemented. The tournament systems used in the poultry industry are among the most unfair schemes we have ever seen forced on farmers. Furthermore, support for that rule is very broad with groups and associations across the ideological spectrum expressing support.

The Department of Agriculture was called "The People's Department" by President Lincoln because of the important role it plays every day in the lives of farmers and the American people. We look forward to working with you and the Department to ensure everyone in agriculture is getting a fair shake so rural America can thrive again.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator



Jon Tester  
United States Senator