

Fighting for the U.S. Cattle Producer!



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Beef Checkoff Industry Input Group
C/O Scott Stuart, CEO
National Livestock Producers Association
13570 Meadowgrass Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Via E-mail and U.S. Mail: scott.stuart@nlpa.org;

Dear Beef Checkoff Industry Input Group:

It is with regret that I write this letter.

As the representative of thousands of U.S. cattle producers in 45 states who pay a substantial percentage of the Beef Checkoff Program's (Beef Checkoff's) annual mandatory contributions, I have endeavored to responsibly represent their interests at each of the Beef Checkoff Industry Input Group's (Checkoff Industry Group's) meetings, including the Checkoff Industry Group's meeting held August 13-14, 2012, in Denver, Colorado (for which you have invoiced R-CALF USA last week the amount of \$195.21, representing R-CALF USA's share of the costs for that meeting).

In your own words, you very recently described my historical involvement as an official representative of R-CALF USA during the Checkoff Industry Group's meetings as "very important," and you stated my "insights, ideas, and experience with the checkoff all play an enormous role in the thoughtful discussions this group has been able to have," and that my contributions to the Checkoff Industry Group's meetings have been "most helpful and appreciated."

Despite such flowery accolades, you and the other Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) contractors serving on the Checkoff Industry Group as well as those other members that wish to become contractors to the CBB, physically barred me at the September 24, 2012 discussions from even entering the meeting room of the Checkoff Industry Group in Denver, Colorado, thus precluding me from representing my constituency, and depriving you and the others my "very important" involvement and "most helpful" contributions.

This discrepancy has caused me and my fellow R-CALF USA members to question why our participation was precluded in these important discussions. I remind you that R-CALF USA's position is to support the Beef Checkoff, but not the misuse of Checkoff funds by any contractor. While I have clearly demonstrated both my and R-CALF USA's willingness to participate in ongoing group discussions regarding how to best enhance the Beef Checkoff's beef promotion

efforts, either through provisions contained in the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (1996 Act) or other legal means, it is now abundantly clear that you and the other Checkoff Industry Group members do not care to even listen to, let alone consider, R-CALF USA's suggestions for enhancing the Beef Checkoff for the purpose of maximizing its benefits for independent U.S. cattle producers.

Your action of barring me from the meeting where both a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) official and officials from the CBB were scheduled to participate in their official, public capacities has effectively silenced the voices of the thousands of Beef Checkoff paying cattle producers I represent.

R-CALF USA will now, because of your actions, be forced to consider its remaining options with which to carry out its member policies relative to the Beef Checkoff since the option of working with other interested industry groups to have an open and honest discussion of the issues impacting all cattle producers in our Great Nation, as well as those who import our product, has been stymied by your unwillingness to allow all national groups to participate.

It is indeed unfortunate that because of your actions, USDA will now have to repeat its presentation, incur duplicative expense, and spend the extra time necessary to separately make its presentation to R-CALF USA. Also, CBB officials will likewise have to incur duplicative expenses and time expenditures so they can be available as official resources to R-CALF USA, just as they were for you and the others attending the meeting from which I was barred. This is now the only way the R-CALF USA Beef Checkoff Committee can receive all the facts and knowledge regarding USDA's interpretation of the 1996 Act, ask questions of USDA and CBB, and help formulate enhancements and possible improvements to the current program through the 1996 Act. This type of wasteful uses of Beef Checkoff resources appears not to benefit anyone and serves only to drain the CBB's dwindling funds.

As always, R-CALF USA will steadfastly continue supporting efforts on behalf of its membership to more effectively and efficiently promote the increased consumption of beef, not only in the United States but worldwide, through messages to consumers regarding the healthy benefits of including beef in their balanced meal plan. With proper promotion, it is R-CALF USA's belief that the profitability of the independent cattle producer will continue to improve. R-CALF USA looks forward to being included in any future discussions to enhance the Beef Checkoff.

Respectfully,



Joel Gill, Chair

R-CALF USA Beef Checkoff Committee

Cc: U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack
Craig Shackelford, USDA-AMS