

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 8, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Attorney General Garland:

On May 22, 2020, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Antitrust Division issued civil investigative demands (CIDs) to the four largest meatpackers in the United States due to concerns of anticompetitive conduct within the beef industry. Unfortunately, the DOJ has not provided any updates regarding the investigation's status or conclusive reports resulting from this review. We respectfully request details on the outcome of the investigation. Should this matter require more time, we encourage the Antitrust Division to continue its civil investigation while at minimum providing a status update to Congress.

We understand that a thorough investigation can take many months, but it concerns us that farmers, ranchers, and the packers themselves have all been left with little direction since the CIDs were issued. As you may know, the price for live cattle in the United States has decreased in the last several years, forcing many small operators to make difficult decisions as they strive to stay in business and keep their farms operational. Yet, at the same time, the price of boxed beef has increased significantly, raising consumer prices and widening the gap between live cattle prices, which is a concern for ranchers and consumers alike. This disparity has only been accelerated by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the labor shortages in processing facilities due to enhanced government benefits, all of which has resulted in continued food supply chain disruption.

These challenges reinforce the need to ensure that our nation's farmers, ranchers, and producers operate in transparent markets, which in turn helps feed American families. We ask that the DOJ continue its attentiveness to this matter and provide updates of findings to ensure confidence in our commodity markets. Thank you for your review and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Michael Guest
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

Sanford Bishop
Member of Congress

Rick Crawford
Member of Congress

Rick Allen
Member of Congress

William Timmons
Member of Congress

Austin Scott
Member of Congress

Scott DesJarlais
Member of Congress

Mike Rogers
Member of Congress

Scott Franklin
Member of Congress

Bill Posey
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Kat Cammack
Member of Congress

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress

Bruce Westerman
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Tom Rice
Member of Congress

Ralph Norman
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Garret Graves
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Barry Moore
Member of Congress



Diana Harshbarger
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



Julia Letlow
Member of Congress



Drew Ferguson
Member of Congress



Steven Palazzo
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



David Rouzer
Member of Congress



Madison Cawthon
Member of Congress



Gregory F. Murphy
Member of Congress



Mike Johnson
Member of Congress



Robert Aderholt
Member of Congress



Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress



Frank D. Lucas
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress



Mary E. Miller
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Adrian Smith
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



James Comer
Member of Congress



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress



Lisa McClain
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Michelle Fischbach
Member of Congress



Tom Cole
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Markwayne Mullin

Markwayne Mullin
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Liz Cheney

Liz Cheney
Member of Congress

Stephanie L. Bice

Stephanie Bice
Member of Congress