

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretaries Burwell and Vilsack,

We are concerned with the scientific integrity of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's recommendation to remove "lean meat" from the statement of a healthy dietary pattern, and we seek an extension of the 45-day comment period for stakeholders to comment on the "Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee."

We are concerned about this committee's suggestion to decrease consumption of red and processed meats. The report suggests that dietary patterns with positive health benefits are described as high in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, seafood, legumes, and nuts and moderate in low- and non-fat dairy products. Dietary patterns with positive health benefits are also described as lower in red and processed meat.

Unfortunately, this statement ignores the peer-reviewed and published scientific evidence that shows the role of lean red meats as part of a healthy diet. Furthermore, the statement is misleading as it suggests current American diets include too much meat. Government data shows the protein food category is the only food group being consumed within the 2010 daily recommended values. It is misleading for the report to suggest eating less meat when lean meat is not being overconsumed based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommendations.

Additionally, we have strong concerns with the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee going beyond its purview of nutrition and health research to include topics such as sustainability. The 14-member advisory committee does not have the background or expertise required to make these suggestions in this report. We strongly encourage you to stay within the statutory authority of your respective departments when finalizing the 2015 Dietary Guidelines.

Not only do we represent farmers and ranchers who raise animals to provide healthy meat products, but we also represent consumers who enjoy lean meat as an important food in their diet. The inconsistencies brought forward in the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's report are significant. We encourage you to carefully consider the most relevant nutrition scientific literature and reject the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's inconsistent

conclusions regarding the role of meat in Americans' diets as you finalize the Dietary Guidelines.

We request that you grant an extension of the comment period beyond the allotted 45 days, which expires on April 8, 2015. It is important to allow enough time for interested stakeholders to carefully review the 571-page report.

Sincerely,



JOHN THUNE
United States Senator



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator



DEB FISCHER
United States Senator



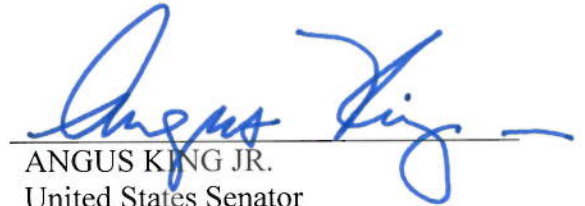
JONI ERNST
United States Senator



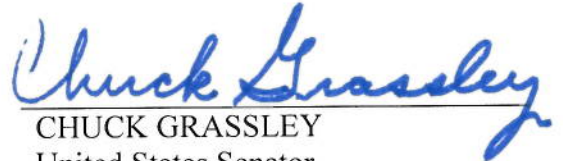
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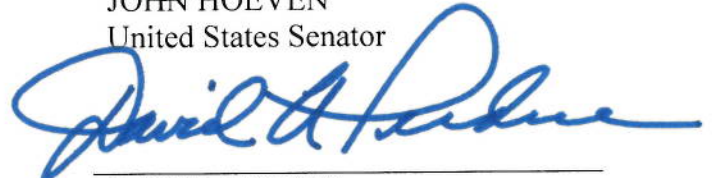
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CHUCK GRASSLEY
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JOHN HOEVEN
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DAVID PERDUE
United States Senator



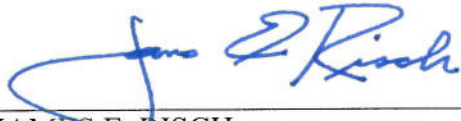
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JERRY MORAN
United States Senator



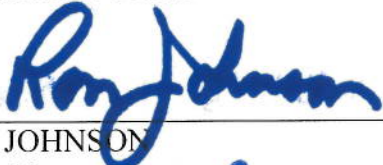
TOM COTTON
United States Senator



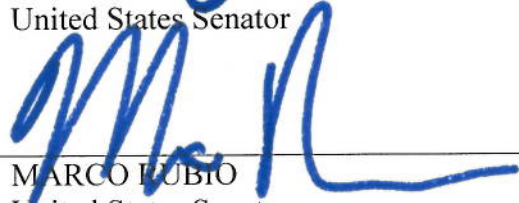
JAMES E. RISCH
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MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



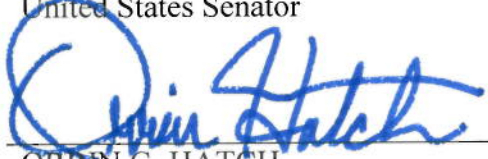
RON JOHNSON
United States Senator



MARCO RUBIO
United States Senator



RICHARD BURR
United States Senator



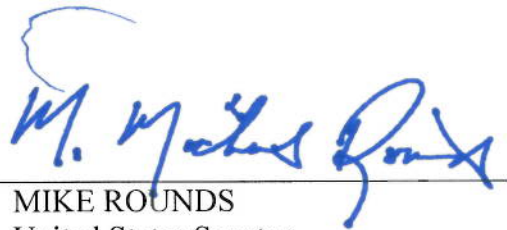
ORRIN G. HATCH
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JOHN BOOZMAN
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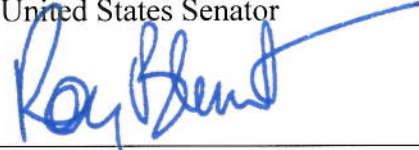
THOM TILLIS
United States Senator



MIKE ROUNDS
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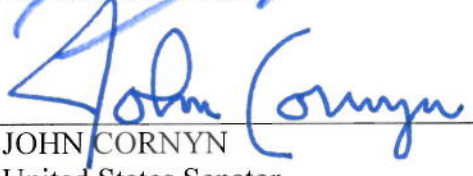
CORY GARDNER
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ROY BLUNT
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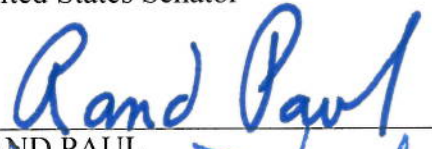
JAMES LANKFORD
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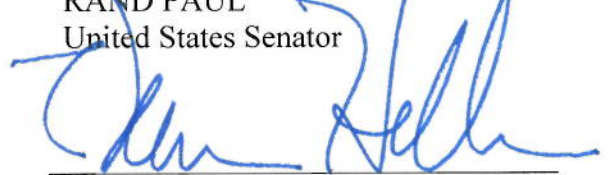
JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



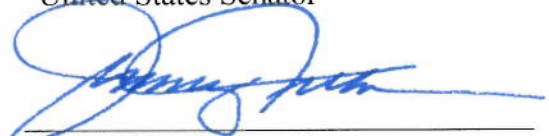
LAMAR ALEXANDER
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RAND PAUL
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DEAN HELLER
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JOHNNY ISAKSON
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