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I am writing to all my fellow cattle producers and beef consumers. Are you feeling the pinch with increased expenses and getting basically the same price for your calves since 2016? Or if you have a load of cattle finished and can't get a buyer out to even look at them? Seen a crazy increase in the ribeyes or burger you buy in the grocery store? This is not by accident, nor will things change unless you take action.

There are two major bills being discussed right now in the Senate Ag committee, one is the Thune/ Tester/ Rounds/ Booker Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (MCOOL) Bill (S.2716). This will bring back the label on the beef in the grocery store, "Born, raised and processed in the USA" Right now there is no such labeling on beef. Next time you're in the grocery store take a look at the meat case and look for yourself. The other is the Grassley/ Tester 50/14 Cattle Protection Bill (S.949). This will make the packers buy 50% of their cattle through cash bidding and take the cattle to slaughter in 14 days. This will bring back price discovery in the market through actual cash bidding. The large number of captive supply cattle held by packers is making it very difficult for cash sellers to access the market, which is why immediate action is needed.

Call (your state's) Senators and Representative at (202) 224-3121 and tell them you want to see where your beef comes from in the store and tell them you want fair competition in the marketplace on your cattle. The Dusty Johnson bill that passed is not enough to bring back transparency and competition in the marketplace. The cattle industry is headed just like the hogs went, vertical integration and I'm certain that didn't help anyone that's trying to make a living farming in northeast Nebraska or southeast South Dakota.

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