January 28, 2014

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Nutrition  
Committee on Agriculture  
328-A Russell Senate Office Building  
1300 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20510  
Washington, DC  20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Nutrition  
Committee on Agriculture  
328-A Russell Senate Office Building  
1300 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20510  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Members of Congress:

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) is the nation’s oldest and largest trade association for cattlemen, representing 140,000 cattle producers through direct membership and our state affiliates. NCBA’s membership strongly opposes the Farm Bill conference report filed yesterday.

For more than three years NCBA has worked to draft a farm bill that America’s cattle industry can support. Unfortunately, the conference report excludes the House-passed language on the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Act (GIPSA) which would refocus the USDA’s regulation on the specific areas of contraction, as directed by Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill. This oversight is detrimental to producers throughout the U.S. as it fails to restrict the reach of GIPSA.

We are also disappointed that a WTO-compliant resolution to address mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) was not reached, particularly in the face of retaliatory actions by the governments of Mexico and Canada. COOL was originally created in the 2002 Farm Bill and has been a failure by every measure. The World Trade Organization (WTO) has ruled on multiple occasions that the U.S. mandatory COOL policy violates WTO standards and if not resolved, Mexico and Canada will be forced to retaliate against the U.S. beef industry. Mexico and Canada are two of our largest export markets for U.S. beef.

We ask for your support in opposing the conference report. Please help us send the message that these issues need to be addressed in this farm bill.

Sincerely,

Scott George  
President