

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 28, 2014

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol S-128
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol S-146-A
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby,

As the end of the fiscal year approaches we write to support the exclusion of certain provisions included in the House version of the *Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2015* (H.R. 4800) from any legislation before the Senate providing funding for the federal government in Fiscal Year 2015.

As currently written, Section 730 of H.R. 4800 would prevent the Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) from finalizing several rules under the Packers & Stockyard Act (P&S Act), while also seeking to repeal several other rules that have already been finalized. The legislative rider is attempting to thwart rules that, in part, allow farmers to request documents showing them how their pay is calculated, ensures they are given adequate notice of a halt in animal deliveries, and ensures that they can exercise their right to speak with their Congressional representatives without fear of retaliation.

The Senate's *Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2015* (S. 2389), that passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 22, 2014, does not contain similar language. We support the Senate Appropriations Committee's decision not to include language in S. 2389 that disrupts GIPSA's ability to finalize P&S Act rules and we support excluding such language from any final legislation to fund the government in Fiscal Year 2015.

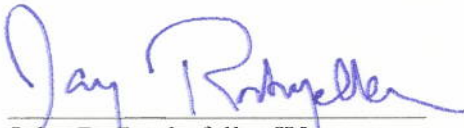
The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, which you supported, directed GIPSA to publish rules implementing the P&S Act to address fraudulent, retaliatory, and anti-competitive practices in the livestock and poultry industries. In 2010, GIPSA proposed a set of P&S Act rules, fulfilling its responsibilities under the 2008 Farm Bill. In late 2011, GIPSA finalized some of the rules but was prevented from finalizing others by a legislative rider included in the Fiscal Year 2012 agriculture appropriations bill. Since then, legislative riders have prevented the completion of the task given to GIPSA by the 2008 Farm Bill. The 2014 Farm Bill, the proper

venue for making policy decisions about the P&S Act, was intentionally silent on the issues addressed by this legislative rider.

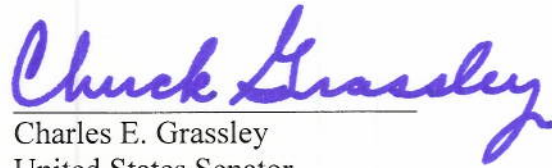
This rider is anti-farmer; if passed into law it will reduce farmer rights, thwart the will of Congress, and prevent GIPSA from completing its task of writing common sense rules of the road for the contract livestock and poultry production industry.

We again urge you to exclude any and all legislative riders preventing GIPSA from finalizing or implementing any P&S Act rules.


Sincerely,



John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



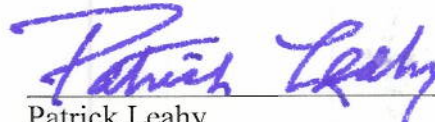
Tim Johnson
United States Senator



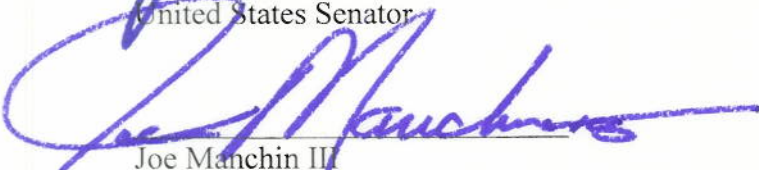
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



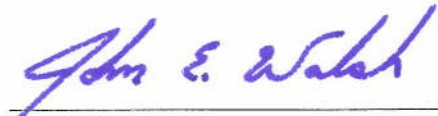
Tom Harkin
United States Senator



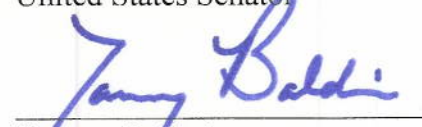
Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator



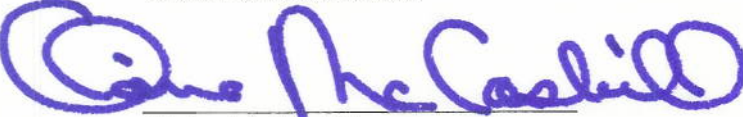
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



John Walsh
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator