

Good Morning Chairman Johnson and members of the House Agriculture Committee. My name is Stefanie Maher. My husband and I ranch in South West Sioux County where we raise registered cattle.

I appear before you today, to urge you to vote in favor of HB 1487. As the bookkeeper for our operation, I find it extremely difficult to get the refund form from the ND Beef Commission. Their way of doing things hasn't made this process 'simple as possible.' My name is on the cattle brand as well as bank statements and other important documents regarding our operation; yet I cannot get this simple piece of paper for a refund because my name isn't on the sale slip. Changing the word 'must' to 'may' will truly make this voluntary.

My personal experience with calling the ND Beef Commission has not been pleasant. Every time I would call in it would take at least 10 minutes on the phone because our sale slip is in the ranch name. I would have to state that I am part of the ranch and that my name is on the brand. This lady would then transfer me to another where I would have to explain my point again that I am qualified to request the Beef Check Off refund application because the ranch name is my husband and myself. They would normally mail the form out then. There was once that they absolutely would not mail until they talked to my husband.

I finally became fed up with the process. So, I quit calling to request the refund application. I didn't want to deal with the headache. I never called for a year and then decided it is my money and I'm going to get it back. The only way to do this was to call the sale barn to place my name on the sale slip. I have to make sure my name is on the slip every time we sell any cattle.

Thank you for hearing my concerns. I would be happy to answer any questions.