

Mr Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Travis Anderson and I'm from Warwick North Dakota, I'd like to start my testimony by telling you a story about my experience with the checkoff.

Several years ago I sold some cattle to someone in South Dakota by private sale. Over a year later I got a notice from the North Dakota beef commission stating I owed them 4 dollars a head for my cattle that I had sold, 2 dollars for the federal side and 2 dollars for the state. I had thought that they were included in my sale but I must have been mistaken. I don't always agree with the checkoff and I knew that I was entitled to my 2 dollars a head from the state so I called the commission and stated to them that I don't agree with how they are using my tax dollars. I proposed a compromise that I give them the fed dollars and leave out the state dollars because I can already request a refund from the state. They replied to me that I only have 60 days to file that. I replied to them so that we were clear, they can come assess me over a year later after I made a sale, but if I want to file for my refund I have to do it within 60 days, and hope I get it done on time. I had no choice but to eat the cost and just pay the fee.

I ask the members of the Committee.

Is this fair?

If they make a clerical error a year prior and they get to collect from me, but if I make the same error and I still only have 20 days to comply

I am not totally against the checkoff but believe every producer should get a vote on it. When the extra dollar was put on, we were at the highest beef prices that producers ever got. We've seen prices drop much lower for the last 5 to 6 years despite having a checkoff that is supposed to work in our interest. What are those dollars doing for us right now? If I'm paying into a system that isn't showing me results right now when I need it most, I feel it is only fair to vote with my wallet and not pay into it.

I urge you all to support this bill because it gives me a choice.

Sincerely,

Travis Anderson