



KENTUCKY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State Capitol

Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

502-564-8100

June 11, 2020

The Honorable William Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
960 Pennsylvania Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Request for investigation into potential anticompetitive practices by meat packers in the cattle industry

Attorney General Barr:

We write to you today in regards to the letter you received from Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles and Attorney General Daniel Cameron dated May 15, 2020. In that letter the Commissioner and Attorney General request that you investigate potentially illegal conduct by some in the beef industry. We, the Chairmen and members of the Interim Joint Committee on Agriculture of the Kentucky General Assembly, echo these concerns and now voice our own.

As the previous letter notes, only four processors control over eighty percent of the American beef market. There have been concerns in the past about bad actors engaging in anticompetitive practices and market manipulation. These concerns have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

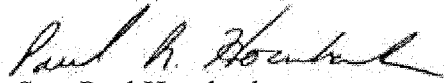
We, as state legislators, are very close with the people of our districts. We have heard from our constituents across the Commonwealth about the wide disparity between the price of cattle and the price of processed beef. Some of us are cattlemen ourselves and have personally witnessed this disparity.

Kentucky is one of the top beef producing states in the nation and many of our producers are small family farms. Unfortunately, we also have one of the lowest median incomes among the states. Our farmers and consumers are particularly affected by these price fluctuations. Every dollar counts to our citizens.

Since the supply chain for processed beef is fairly linear compared to other commodities, it strikes us that the sharp increase in prices seems to occur in the processing phase. We request that you use all appropriate powers granted to you to investigate this disparity and any other matters that may arise from it.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns about this or any other matter. We, as the representatives of the people of the Commonwealth, are ready and willing to assist you in this matter in any way we can.

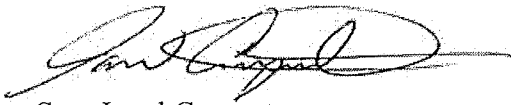
Sincerely,



Sen. Paul Hornback
Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Agriculture



Rep. Richard Heath
Co-Chair
Interim Joint Committee on Agriculture



Sen. Jared Carpenter



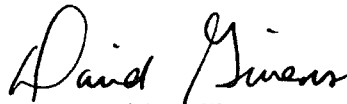
Sen. Stephen West



Sen. Matt Castlen




Rep. Myron Dossett



Sen. David P. Givens



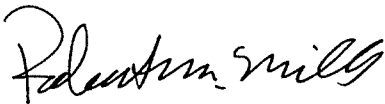
Rep. Joe Graviss



Sen. Stan Humphries



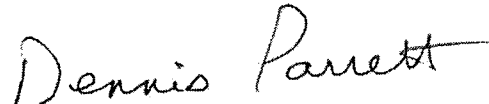
Rep. Mark Hart



Sen. Robby Mills



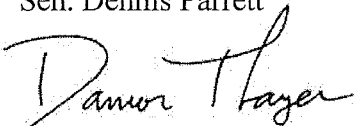
Rep. Kim King



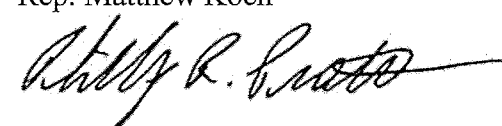
Sen. Dennis Parrett



Rep. Matthew Koch



Sen. Damon Thayer



Rep. Phillip Pratt



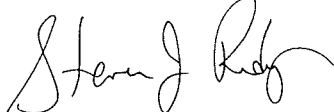
Sen. Robin L. Webb




Rep. Brandon Reed



Rep. Rachel Roberts


Rep. Rob Rothenburger

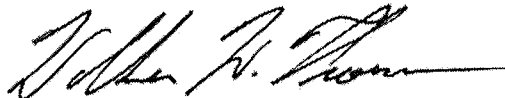

Rep. Steven Rudy

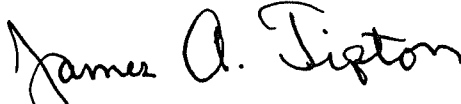

Rep. Dean Schamroe



Rep. John Sims Jr.

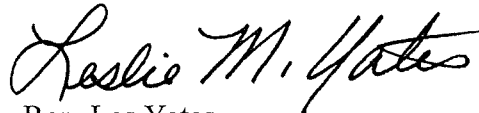

Rep. Wilson Stone


Rep. Nancy Tate


Rep. Walker Thomas


Rep. James Tipton


Rep. Susan Westrom


Rep. Les Yates