

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SJM 8010

---

---

As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, February 8, 2005

**Brief Description:** Petitioning the United States Department of Agriculture to delay plans to reopen the border to Canadian cattle and beef products.

**Sponsors:** Senators Rasmussen, Schoesler, Sheldon, Franklin, Roach, Spanel, Deccio, McAuliffe, Shin, Haugen, Prentice, Fairley, Rockefeller, Mulliken and Morton.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 2/1/05, 2/8/05 [DPS].

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Joint Memorial No. 8010 be substituted therefor, and the substitute joint memorial do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin, Jacobsen, Morton and Sheldon.

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** On January 4, 2005, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposed a rule to reopen its border effective on March 7, 2005 to the importation of Canadian live cattle and processed beef products. Shortly thereafter, on January 11th, Canada announced that another cow in Canada tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). In response, the USDA announced that it would send a technical team to Canada to investigate the circumstances that resulted in this additional infection.

Many foreign markets to U.S. beef products were closed due to the discovery on December 23, 2004, of one cow with BSE in the United States. These foreign markets have yet to reopen. The origin of this animal was Canada.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The United States Department of Agriculture is requested to delay moving forward with its plan to reopen the border to Canadian cattle and beef products on March 7, 2005, until United States inspectors have had adequate time to conduct a thorough examination of the Canadian cattle industry, and to issue and fully evaluate the findings of its investigation.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Added is a statement regarding the importance to the American beef industry of reestablishing trust with our trading partners and reopening export markets.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Testimony For:** There are a number of concerns that the livestock industry has to the proposed federal action to reopen the United States to the importation of cattle and beef products from Canada. There is opposition to importing cattle that are over 30 months of age. There is concern: as to how the identification of these cattle will be verified; whether the imported animals will be vaccinated or will carry livestock diseases including brucellosis, tuberculosis and anaplasmosis; whether the sudden increase in imports will be done in a way to minimize market disruption; what the status of feeder heifers will be; whether these animals will be placed in quarantine status to assure contagious diseases are not spread; and that imported animal arrive at their proper destinations.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association.