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August 7, 2013

Collin Peterson, Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Veterinary Opposition to Amendment #71 (King Amendment to Farm Bill)

Dear Representative Peterson:

I am writing on behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association and our 6,000 members nationwide to express strong opposition to a provision offered by Representative Steve King, Amendment #71 adopted during the House Agriculture Committee's markup of H.R. 1947 (the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013), and now part of the Farm Bill passed by the House on July 11th (H.R. 2642). We urge you to do all you can to ensure that neither this language nor anything like it is included in final House-Senate legislation.

Rep. King's amendment aims to block state laws protecting the health and welfare of farm animals. The provision is so broad and overreaching that it could also preempt a wide swath of state laws covering everything from child labor to dangerous pesticides to labeling of farm-raised fish to alcohol and tobacco products. It seeks to negate most state and local laws regarding the production or manufacture of agriculture products, directing:

“[T]he government of a State or locality therein shall not impose a standard or condition on the production or manufacture of any agricultural product sold or offered for sale in interstate commerce if (1) such production or manufacture occurs in another State; and (2) the standard or condition is in addition to the standards and conditions applicable to such production or manufacture pursuant to (A) Federal law; and (B) the laws of the State and locality in which such production or manufacture occurs.”

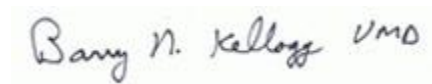
As a professional veterinary association with a focus on the

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health and welfare of all animals, we are particularly concerned about the unprecedented impact that the “King Amendment” would have on state laws that protect animal well-being. Many states have enacted animal welfare laws restricting inhumane practices such as intensive confinement of animals on large farms, the killing of sharks for their fins, and the sale of dog and cat meat. These laws have been passed in response to the concerns of their citizens, including animal welfare experts from the veterinary community. The “King Amendment” would negate countless of these laws, effectively spurning the will of the citizenry to protect animals within their state, as well as other important laws to protect the health and welfare of citizens themselves.

We urge Congress to reject the King amendment or any similar radical assault on duly-enacted state and local laws. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry N. Kellogg VMD". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

Barry Kellogg, VMD
Senior Veterinary Advisor
Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association