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**SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR  
U.S SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES  
- OPPOSING COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING -**

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20510 (Senator) 20515 (Representative)

Dear (Title) (Last Name):

I am writing to you to ask your support in opposing any attempts to repeal the two-year moratorium on mandatory country-of-origin labeling for meat products that Congress enacted into law.

Instead, there should be a workable, voluntary program within the Fiscal Year 2004 Agriculture or Omnibus Appropriations bill. Industry is developing a voluntary program right now.

The mandatory country-of-origin labeling law will be extremely costly. Also, it will provide no benefit to the industry or to consumers.

The cost of country-of-origin labeling is extremely high. USDA just recently estimated the cost of such labeling to be \$3.9 BILLION in the first year alone, of which \$2.4 billion are costs that the meat industry will have to bear. In addition, USDA has estimated the long term costs to the American economy as a whole to be almost \$600 million every year.

If country-of-origin labeling is required, my company will incur costs due to the installation of a livestock segregation system and segregating products that are derived from those livestock. This segregation would include keeping meat from those animals separate as the carcasses proceed down the line, in the coolers, as the meat goes through the fabrication process, as the trimmings are sent to the grinding operation, and ultimately, as the meat is stored for distribution.

And because of liability concerns and the requirements for an audit trail system, my company would be forced to require third-party verification of an animal's origin from my livestock suppliers. I would have to adjust all my livestock contracts, and in some cases terminate business relationships with livestock producers who have less reliable documentation as to the animal's birth. I would possibly have to stop livestock purchases from the spot market or from dairy farms.

I urge you to help repeal mandatory country-of-origin labeling for meat products and instead replace it with a workable, voluntary program. Please contact me and let me know your position on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

**(Letter should be on your company letterhead)**