



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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The Navajo Nation supports Cattle Ranchers and the American Beef Labeling Act of 2021

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Naabik'iyáti' Committee (NABI) of the 24th Navajo Nation Council passed Resolution No. NABID-54-21 supporting the American Beef Labeling Act of 2021 that seeks to reinstate the mandatory country of origin labeling requirements for beef to ensure its authenticity. It was unanimously passed by a vote of 20 in favor and sponsored by Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie, an advocate for Navajo ranchers and farm lands.

The current beef labeling system in the United States allows imported beef that is neither born nor raised in the country to be labeled as a product of the USA.

“Our Navajo ranchers raise premium beef for the American consumer, and we need to protect the integrity of their product in the marketplace. The American Beef Labeling Act will ensure beef from the Navajo Nation that is born and raised on Navajo land is labeled as ‘Made in the U.S.A.’ We just want to make sure our beef products are properly labeled and represented so families can make an educated decision about what they want to put on their table. This resolution sends a clear message to Congressional leaders that the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States supports the proper labeling of beef, and that we will protect our Indigenous ranchers and cattle farmers,” said Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Church Rock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau).

The Mandatory Country Of Origin Labeling (M-COOL) for beef enables United States cattle producers to compete in the retail grocery market by empowering consumers to choose to purchase their beef product that was born, raised, and harvested in the USA.

“The data shows us that American families choose to purchase beef products that are labeled from the USA and the demand for cattle born and raised in the United States is increasing. However, without passage of the American Beef Labeling Act, beef from other countries that are falsely labeled as authentic and exclusive projects of the United States directly hurts our Navajo farmers and ranchers. Especially during this pandemic, we need to offer safe and quality food products for all families trying to survive and those earning enough money to live. The Navajo Nation urges the United States Senate and President Joe Biden to immediately approve this Congressional bill to protect the integrity of American beef and the livelihood of the Native American beef producer,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimated in 2012 that 18% of the available beef in the U.S. marketplace is sourced either as an imported product or from imported cattle converted to beef in a U.S. packing plant from more than 20 countries.

Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF USA) Regional Director Cash Carruth from Bloomfield, NM, added, “We are pleased that our New

Mexico Senators have co-sponsored this important legislation and sincerely hopes the Senators in Arizona and Utah will likewise join to help the Navajo Nation and all other citizens of the southwest. Cattle are an important economic interest on Native American lands and support from Tribal Nations will ensure we get this important Senate Bill passed.”

Senator John Thune (R-South Dakota) introduced the American Beef Labeling Act of 2021 in September. The bill is co-sponsored by Senators Jon Tester (D-Montana), Mike Rounds (R-South Dakota), Cory Booker (D-New Jersey), John Hoeven (R-North Dakota), Ben Ray Lujan (D-New Mexico), Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyoming), Martin Heinrich (D-New Mexico), John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), and Kristen Gillibrand (D-New York)

The 24th Navajo Nation Council hereby authorizes the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, President of the Navajo Nation, and their designees, to advocate and support passage of United States Senate Bill S. 2716 titled “The American Beef Labeling Act of 2021”.

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