

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 10, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We write to you regarding your recent announcement that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) would be conducting an investigation into beef pricing margins following the fire at a major beef processing facility in Holcomb, Kansas. We appreciate this decision and urge you to ensure that this investigation is conducted in a prompt, thorough, and transparent manner and that you take appropriate enforcement actions should any unfair or unlawful market distorting practices be identified.

As you know, this fire resulted in a significant disruption in the cattle market and corresponded with a drop in prices that is having a substantial impact on the livelihoods of ranchers and related businesses across Montana. Additionally, the uncertainty that has been created exacerbates the existing challenges facing ranchers and the livestock industry, whether it be cattle prices, natural disasters, disease, or market access issues.

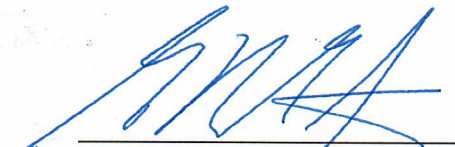
Ensuring this investigation is completed in a comprehensive manner and that appropriate enforcement actions are pursued, if necessary, is of utmost importance to Montana ranchers. We also request that you provide regular updates to Congress and impacted stakeholders regarding the status of the investigation as it moves forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other critical issues.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator



GREG GIANFORTE
United States Representative