



**Independent Beef Association of North Dakota**  
*Your statewide voice in the cattle industry.*

**Kenny Graner**

President  
701-663-3805  
District 1

September 15, 2014

**Larry Kinev**

Vice Preseident  
701-327-8205  
District 2

Honorable Tom Vilsack  
United States Secretary of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

**Allen Lund**

Secretary  
701-422-3747  
District 1

Re: Beef Checkoff Reform

**Mike Heaton**

Treasurer  
Past President  
701-673-3149  
District 2

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

**Frank Tomac**

Director at Large  
701-522-3430

The Independent Beef Association of North Dakota (I-BAND) has monitored the industry group which has worked with you for the past three years, concerning the Beef Checkoff Program. I-BAND sees no progress in these meetings and is aware of the National Farmers Union withdrawing from said meetings.

**Patrick L. Becker**

Past President  
701-422-3396  
District 1

Therefore, we are compelled to offer our recommendations at this time. It is I-BAND's position that there is a huge conflict of interest in the Beef Checkoff Program (checkoff). The primary contractor of the checkoff, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) created, owns, houses and administers the Federation of State Beef Councils (Federation). The Federation a non-legal entity has equal seats as the Cattlemen's Beef Board on the most powerful of operating committees. It is very troubling that the Federation has approval authority of checkoff operations in which NCBA benefits financially from these decisions. Second the NCBA as primary contractor uses checkoff funds to subsidize its operating expenditures, this gives NCBA an advantage when lobbying.

**Francis (Buck) Maher**

701-673-3161  
District 2

**Dwight Keller**

701-445-7350  
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**Kerry Dockter**

701-884-2754  
District 2

**Dave Just**

701-226-7546  
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**Ron Volk**

701-872-2172  
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I-BAND policy is as follows.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED I-BAND recommends the NCBA, the CBB, and the Federation each become individually independent and autonomous in order to alleviate the impression that they are operating as one entity.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED I-BAND supports the producer's right to vote on the Beef Checkoff on a periodic basis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED in order for a producer to vote on the Beef Checkoff in ND, the producer must be of legal voting age.

Therefore I-BAND recommends:

1. A complete separation of the Federation and NCBA.
2. Prohibit any policy organization from contracting with the Beef Checkoff Program.
3. A periodic referendum of continuation of the checkoff.
4. rewriting the Beef Checkoff Program under the Commodity, Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996.

I-BAND offers these recommendations of reform for your consideration.

Sincerely,

I-BAND President  
Kenny Graner