



Congresswoman
Rosa L. DeLauro

Press Release

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USDA Should Expedite Rule to Eliminate Downer Cattle Loophole

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (CT-3) issued the following statement in response to Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer announcement that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would begin working on a proposed rule to prohibit the slaughter of all disabled non-ambulatory cattle, also known as “downer cattle.” Earlier this year, DeLauro introduced legislation that would eliminate the loophole that allows downer cattle to be slaughtered for the food supply.

“Secretary Schafer should be commended for proposing to close the downer loophole and I would strongly urge him to expedite this rule, as they have previously done. Cattle that are unable to stand or walk unassisted should not have been allowed into our food supply because it posed an unnecessary threat to consumers. This loophole also contributed to unspeakable abuses that were documented at the Hallmark slaughter facility in California by the Humane Society, which resulted in the largest meat recall in history.

“Because of the critical importance of closing this loophole – and the consensus by food safety advocates, business and now the USDA – the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) should propose and implement this rule immediately.”

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