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May 20, 2008

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**KOHL WELCOMES AGENCY STEPS TO RESTORE DOWNER
COW BAN AT MEAT PLANTS**

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, US Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI), Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, was informed by Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer that the Department is taking steps to restore a complete ban on non-ambulatory cattle or so-called “downer cows” from being processed at meat plants. This action comes partly in response to a petition submitted by the American Meat Institute, the National Milk Producers Federation, and the National Meat Association after the Westland/Hallmark incident. On February 28, Senator Kohl chaired a hearing of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee to examine humane slaughter and food safety challenges in the beef industry in which he called on the agency to implement immediate steps to improve inspections at slaughter plants, including banning all downer cattle from entering the food supply.

“A strictly enforceable downer ban will eliminate confusion and move the ball forward on food safety and humane standards, while restoring consumer faith in a vital American sector;” Kohl said. **“I have visited personally with the Secretary about this issue on several occasions and welcome this significant step toward restoring the rule as it was intended to protect American families, retailers and the beef industry itself.”**

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