

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 20, 2019

The Honorable Raymond P. Martinez  
Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Martinez:

On August 9, 2019, a fire caused a Tyson beef processing plant in Holcomb, Kansas to shut down. I understand you received a request from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) to suspend Hours of Service for drivers hauling live cattle until the Holcomb facility is rebuilt. I urge the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to work with NCBA and industry groups to find a solution to the transportation and logistical issues that have ensued as a result of this event.

The Holcomb, Kansas, plant processed 6,000 head of cattle per day and was six percent of the total U.S. processing capacity. There will be a 30,000 head per week shortfall in cattle processing capacity as a result of this fire and the plant's expectation to be out of operation for months.

Due to this situation, drivers will need to haul live cattle to different facilities hundreds of miles away and cross state lines to continue processing. It is imperative that cattle processing continues and other plants can absorb the lost processing capacity. Cattle are scheduled to be processed months in advance and the cattle currently scheduled to be processed in the Holcomb plant cannot wait in feedyards indefinitely – they must be transported to different facilities.

Until the Tyson plant reopens, transportation issues will undoubtedly remain. Again, I strongly urge the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to work with NCBA and other industry groups towards a solution to these pressing transportation and logistical issues.

I appreciate the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for their attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Deb Fischer  
United States Senator

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