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NDFU Adopts Policy on NCBA

Board of Governors concerned with proposed changes

North Dakota Farmers Union (NDFU) Board of Governors met in Bismarck on Jan. 12-13 and adopted new policy regarding proposed changes to the governance structure of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). The organization had many concerns with the current proposal, which would limit grassroots input and producer control of check-off dollars.

"North Dakota Farmers Union has specific concerns with the proposed governance structure adopted by NCBA Governance Task Force, such as the creation of a House of Delegates, limited control of state beef councils and the use of check-off dollars in the proposed structure," NDFU President Robert Carlson said. "The Board of Governors policy now states that NDFU is opposed to the NCBA having the majority of policy-making authority and that any organization receiving check-off funds should strictly be controlled by producers."

The NCBA's current proposed structure began development in 2009 and is up for consideration in July 2010. Many new ideas were included in the proposal. The creation of a House of Delegates was introduced and all delegates to the House of Delegates must be NCBA members, which limits grassroots input and gives the majority of the policy-making authority to NCBA. The current proposal also calls for 40 percent of the total votes within the House of Delegates to be allotted to state beef councils, which gives 60 percent of the vote to NCBA membership and service organization. NDFU is opposed to any organization receiving check-off funds that is not controlled by the producers. These proposed changes to NCBA's structure would give the organization indirect control of the check-off dollars, effectively blurring the lines; NDFU has a longstanding policy opposing these funds being contracted or donated to organizations for the use of political or lobbying efforts.

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-Robert Carlson