



2020 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Concurrent Resolution 601

Introduced by: **Senator Cammack**

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Supporting trade negotiations to remove barriers to**
2 **country of origin labelling.**

3 WHEREAS, in 2002, Congress amended the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require
4 that retailers notify customers purchasing covered commodities, including beef and pork, of
5 the commodities' origin, by means of a "Country of Origin Label" (COOL);

6 WHEREAS, the COOL requirements were not applicable to restaurants, cafeterias, or
7 processed foods; and

8 WHEREAS, the COOL requirements were designed to provide retailers with flexible labeling
9 options that included bands, placards, pin tags, signs, stickers, and twist ties, for conveying
10 the information in a legible form and in a conspicuous manner; and

11 WHEREAS, consumers were overwhelmingly supportive of COOL, with some United States
12 polls indicating support in the eighty-two to ninety-two percent range; and

13 WHEREAS, in May 2015, based on complaints from Canada and Mexico, the World Trade
14 Organization determined that COOL violated United States trade obligations and threatened
15 to impose retaliatory duties of \$1.1 billion, unless this country removed the requirement that
16 covered commodities, including beef and pork, be sold with a COOL; and

17 WHEREAS, in December 2015, Congress removed mandatory COOL requirements for
18 muscle cut beef and pork, and for ground beef and pork; and

19 WHEREAS, livestock producers continue to be faced with significant and adverse market
20 conditions that result in producers receiving only thirty-seven percent of the consumer dollar;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, since 1974, the number of cattle in this state fell from 5 million to 3.4 million;
23 and

1 WHEREAS, during the last five years since Congress removed mandatory COOL
2 requirements, livestock producers in this state have suffered \$319 million dollars in lost sales;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, in June 2019, more than two dozen members of Congress contacted the United
5 States Trade Representative, Ambassador Robert E. Lighthizer, and in writing urged that as
6 he negotiated the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, he do everything in his power to
7 protect the consumers' right to know from where their food comes and how it is produced,
8 and to restore, by means of the agreement, the COOL program originally enacted by
9 Congress; and

10 WHEREAS, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement ultimately did not include COOL;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Ninety-Fifth Legislature of the
12 State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the Legislature
13 urgently requests the President of the United States and the United States Trade
14 Representative to negotiate and execute agreements, with Canada and Mexico, which will
15 remove trade barriers to COOL; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the clerk of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution
17 to the President of the United States, the speaker and clerk of the United States House of
18 Representatives, the president pro tempore and secretary of the United States Senate, and
19 to the members of the South Dakota Congressional delegation.