



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Rep. Kind Announces New Legislation to Expand Markets for Area Meat Processors

Hudson, Wis. – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) today announced new legislation he introduced to expand the markets for meat processing businesses in western Wisconsin and across the nation. H.R. 1760, *The Expanding Markets for Small Meat Processors Act* would eliminate the ban on the interstate shipment of state-inspected meat, allowing small meat processors increase their business and grow local economies. Rep. Kind made the announcement with State Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Rod Nilsestuen during a visit today to RJ's Meats, an award-winning small meat processor in Hudson.

"These unfair restrictions are severely hindering this industry's ability to grow," Rep. Kind said. "Trusting other nations, but not our own states, to ship meat across borders just doesn't make sense. This bill will expand the market for Wisconsin products, increase competition, and reduce prices for consumers. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and in the senate, to remove this harmful limit on area meat processors."

States often develop their own meat inspection programs to provide the flexibility needed to accommodate small businesses. Although these inspection programs are equivalent to federal standards, currently there are restrictions on the interstate shipment of state-inspected meat. No other agricultural commodity has this type of restriction, state-inspected milk, fruits, vegetables, grain, and fish are all allowed free access to the national market. Currently foreign products have greater nation-wide meat market access than state-inspected meat.

The Expanding Markets for Small Meat Processors Act would eliminate the interstate shipment ban, while ensuring that states maintain their high safety standards. Lifting this restriction will give small meat processors the ability to ship these products in interstate commerce, not only greatly expanding the market for their products, but also benefiting consumers and rural areas.

"Interstate meat shipment will help grow the state's meat processing sector, create jobs, and boost local economies," said DATCP Secretary Rod Nilsestuen. "This legislation is important to the long-term success and growth of Wisconsin's state-inspected meat and poultry processors and the rural communities that they serve."

Rep. Kind is a new member of the House Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over tax and trade issues.