

1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

3 RANCHERS-CATTLEMEN ACTION *

4 LEGAL FUND, UNITED *

5 STOCKGROWERS OF AMERICA, *

6 Plaintiff, *

7 vs. * Case No. 20-CV-2552

8 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF * (RDM)

9 AGRICULTURE, and THOMAS J. *

10 VILSACK, in his official *

11 capacity as Secretary of the *

12 United States Department *

13 of Agriculture, *

14 Defendants *

15 * * * * *

16
17 The Zoom Videoconference Deposition of

18 DENNIS SWEAT was held on Wednesday, February 22, 2023,

19 at 10:07 a.m., at a remote location, before Susan A.

20 Kambouris, Notary Public.

21 Job No. CS5771472

22 REPORTED BY: Susan A. Kambouris (Via Zoom)

1 Q Other than interest rates, fuel costs,
2 equipment costs, lands costs, are there other things
3 that you are remembering right now that are making the
4 financial situation of your business worse?

5 MR. MURASKIN: Objection. It calls for
6 speculation.

7 A You have got feed costs, fertilizer costs,
8 input costs on plants, or seeds, whatever you plant for
9 forage for the cattle.

10 Q Anything else?

11 A I am sure there are about 10,000. You have
12 got me on the spot. It is a kind of hot spot. The
13 pressure, the pressure.

14 Q Anything else you think of, you just let me
15 know. I am just trying to get a comprehensive list
16 there.

17 MR. MURASKIN: Objection.

18 Q What outcome are you hoping for from this
19 lawsuit?

20 MR. MURASKIN: Objection, it calls for a
21 legal conclusion, it calls for speculation.

22 A My outcome, I would like to see the money

1 spent for us to have a voice as a producer. I mean, as
2 a seller, a dollar, two dollars, make it is \$10.00 per
3 cow, is it really going to make that much difference?
4 No, but it means as much to me as it does to the Beef
5 Checkoff they would be fighting for, we would be
6 fighting for. Regardless, I would like to have our
7 money. I would like to have a say of, at least, where
8 we spent, or if nothing else, at least, have proof that
9 as a rancher, if you have 500 cows, and sell \$500.00
10 worth, spend \$500.00 on marketing capital. Who knows?
11 There are lots of ways. Mostly, we just want to have a
12 say where this goes, and how it would benefit us.

13 Q Is the U.S. Department of Agriculture
14 taking an action directly against you that you hope
15 this case will make them stop?

16 MR. MURASKIN: Objection, numerous form
17 objections.

18 A I have no idea about that question. I
19 really don't. I hope they are on the side of us.
20 That's whatever side you are on, right?

21 Q Absolutely, absolutely. As far as you can
22 think of right now, you can't think of any action the