TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

July 2, 2008

The Honorable David Dewhurst
Joint-Chair
Lieutenant Governor
State Capitol, Room 2E.13
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst:

I have reviewed the report titled "Animal Health Commission Transfer Study" prepared by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) staff. The LBB staff sought input from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) on two occasions and we appreciate being included in the study.

Each time TDA staff corresponded with LBB staff on this study, both verbally and in writing, we reiterated the unique importance of the stakeholder input on this matter. The Texas livestock industry is our agricultural sector's top economic engine. Representatives of those industries, such as any of the various Texas livestock or general farm organizations, can best describe the unique nature of this industry's challenges and regulatory issues.

I understand the role of the LBB was to address the functionality of a transfer and not an assessment of industry positions; accordingly, I would urge your interaction with industry should the idea of a transfer be further contemplated.

Thank you for your leadership for Texas and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Staples

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