



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
Wednesday, July 26, 2006

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BAUCUS CALLS FOR PERU TO KEEP PROMISES ON U.S. BEEF

Continued restrictions will "seriously complicate" U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, today said that continued restrictions on U.S. beef in Peru will “seriously complicate” completion of the pending U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement in Congress. In a letter to Peruvian Ambassador Eduardo Ferrero, Baucus called on Peru to keep its pledge to allow imports of beef from the United States consistent with international standards.

The text of the Senator’s letter follows here.

July 26, 2006

Ambassador Eduardo Ferrero
Embassy of Peru
1700 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am writing to underscore my concern regarding Peru’s import conditions for beef from the United States. As part of an exchange of letters between Peru and the United States, your government agreed to allow imports of beef from the United States consistent with the provisions of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organization for Animal Health (“the Code”) by May 31, 2006.

On July 10, 2006, SENASA issued a resolution permitting the importation of bone-in beef from the United States, but required that the meat be derived from animals under 30 months of age. Under the Code, virtually all beef products can be safely traded from a country presenting a controlled BSE risk, like the United States. Meat and offals from animals over 30 months are recognized as safe for human consumption, as long as specified risk materials are removed. As Peru recognized in the exchange of letters, the food safety measures that the United States has instituted meet the guidelines in the Code.

I am very disappointed that Peru has not brought its import policies into conformity with the Code as promised in the exchange of letters. When I met with President Toledo on July 11, I told him that lifting the remaining restrictions on U.S. beef is important as Congress prepares to consider the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement. Failure to do so will seriously complicate consideration of this agreement in Congress. Some U.S. industry groups that are traditionally supportive of trade agreements have already indicated they may oppose Congressional approval of the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement should Peru not allow imports of beef from older animals.

I urge your government to take the necessary action to follow through on its commitments to follow the Code and allow imports of U.S. beef and beef products from animals over 30 months as quickly as possible.

Very truly yours,

Max Baucus

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