



Dear Representative,

Cattle rustlers are calculated, malicious people who must be well organized. Stealing cattle requires trespassing on private property, the proper equipment to gather and transport cattle, a working knowledge of how to handle cattle and a plan to take the cattle somewhere to be sold. Additionally, rustlers must target their victims by having an understanding of the cattle owner's habits as well as the environment where the cattle are to be gathered. The point is this; cattle theft is not a simple theft or theft of opportunity. It is a meticulously planned, brazen action of disregard for property and livelihood.

To help combat cattle rustling, we are respectfully requesting your 'yes' vote on HB 2504 by Representative John Pfeiffer.

HB 2504 does two things:

1. Increases the fine for theft to three times the value of the animal and machinery stolen but caps the maximum fine at \$500,000.
2. Each head of cattle stolen will constitute a separate offense (felony).

According to the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the number of cattle thefts investigations has steadily increased over time with eighty seven investigations conducted in 2015. Investigations in 2013 totaled 64 cases. A total of approximately 1,600 head were reported stolen for the 2015 investigations.

The average herd size for an Oklahoma family farm/ranch is approximately 28 head of cattle. Thieves seldom steal only one head as cattle are more easily managed in groups, yet even the loss of one head can be severely detrimental to family farmers and ranchers.

The value of cattle varies depending upon age and weight. Here are the current values (Oklahoma City sale report - Feb. 23rd):

- \* 425 lb steers - \$218.44 cwt - \$928.37 per head
- \* 550 lb steers - \$184.45 cwt - \$1014.48 per head
- \* 750 lb steers - \$156.52 cwt - \$1173.90 per head
- \* 900 lb steers - \$142.24 cwt - \$1280.16 per head
- \* Mature cows can range widely depending upon quality - \$1,200 to \$10,000's  
(Not to mention genetics that may have taken a lifetime to develop, years of productivity lost and costs associated with developing those cows from birth.)

Again, we respectfully request your 'yes' vote on HB 2504. Thank you for your consideration.

Organizations supporting HB 2504: American Farmers and Ranchers, Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Oklahoma Livestock Marketing Association