

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 29, 2005 LB 150

cattle don't have to sell them if they don't want to pay the checkoff. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Louden. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion. Senator Hudkins.

SENATOR HUDKINS: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. Everybody gets benefit from this checkoff. The producers do. The consumers do because they have the increased knowledge. They have been the beneficiaries of more cuts of meat, research. What does the consumer want? They want a lean, nutritious, wholesome product, and that's what they're getting. Without the research, without the promotion and without the development, we wouldn't probably have the demand for beef that we do. I support the checkoff. Senator Chambers said, or somebody did, I don't know who it was, somebody said, well, I support the checkoff but I don't want to contribute my money. Well, if you say I support the checkoff but I don't want to contribute, then, no, you don't support the checkoff. You're being greedy. We do have a mandatory checkoff. But if you put in the required papers, paperwork, you do get that money back. So, in effect, it is a voluntary checkoff. We recently sold cattle at Columbus. In fact, it was Saturday. We received...and they were going to check the records. They thought that we had received and all-time high for those cattle: 600-pound animals, almost \$1.50 a pound. Now, it's going to show up in the marketplace, yes, of course it will. But if you take off our expenses, you know, the insurance, the feed at the yard, the commission, all of those other things, we very, very gladly paid that \$1 a head checkoff because \$1 back in payment for \$750, to me, that's a pretty good investment. Senator Chambers said that Senator Janssen would like to have people pay more money and then get a refund back. That's not the same thing. When people go to a grocery store, they are buying a product. They take it home and they put it in their refrigerator or in their cupboards. A \$1 checkoff per animal is paying for research, development, and promotion. It is an investment in the future. I believe that we have a couple of bills, I think Senator Redfield is the sponsor of them, where it has to do with unions. If you are working in a union shop but, yet, you are not a member of the union and you want to take advantage of...there's