



# CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

February 15, 2022

Committee on Economic Growth  
Iowa House of Representatives

Attn: House Study Bill 675

Re: Center for Rural Affairs Statement of Support

The Center for Rural Affairs is a private non-profit organization that works to promote opportunity. We engage people in decisions that affect their communities and the quality of their lives, including Iowa's small businesses, main street lockers, and livestock producers.

Iowa's small meat processors play a critical role in rural communities, rural economies, and our state's livestock industry. The Center was a strong proponent of House File 857 in 2021, and is equally supportive of House Study Bill 675. Adopting and implementing the recommendations of the Artisanal Butchery Task Force will be a step forward for Iowa's small processors, and directly responsive to their needs and concerns.

In 2021, we spoke with dozens of small processors across the state. A principal challenge that emerged was the struggle to find skilled workers. Establishing a framework for a one-year community college certificate program addresses this concern and represents a substantial step to cultivate Iowa's next generation of meat processors.

Furthermore, small meat processors are first and foremost small businesses, often family-owned with a small number of employees. Developing and maintaining a library of resources for Iowa-based meat processing businesses, as well as building out a direct-to-consumer toolkit, will provide them with valuable information and lighten the burden of analyzing options on their own.

We were encouraged by the establishment of this task force, and the Legislature's commitment to small meat processors. We are equally encouraged by the task force's recommendations, and encourage you to put them into motion by supporting House Study Bill 675.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kate Hansen  
Policy Associate