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Senator Robert Myers
State Capitol Room 510
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Myers:

Thank you for your sponsorship of Senate Bill 223 CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANIMAL RECORDS. The Alaska Farm Bureau is writing in support of this legislation which would protect our farmers and ranchers personal and business information.

Alaska's agriculture industry is experiencing significant growth. With the supply chain and labor issues, Alaskan's are seeing empty grocery store shelves more often and continuing price increases on food. Now is an important time to support policies that support growth in agriculture to build and resilient food system and diversify our economy.

Alaska is fortunate with lower amounts of pests, diseases, parasites, etc. that impact our livestock. With changes in climate and variations or resistant strains of parasites and pathogens, it's important to keep our state as clean as possible. Knowing that personal and business information and individual testing results are subject to the Public Records Act, many farmers and ranchers are reluctant to work with agencies.

To continue seeing growth in agriculture we will need to continue importing animals. We also want our farmers and ranchers to work with state agencies to monitor for pests, pathogens, and parasites. Senate Bill 223 would provide protections over personal information adding security for our producers.

Giving protections to personal and business information will encourage continued growth in agriculture, expanding value-added agriculture products while protecting the health of our animals and crops. Senate Bill 223 still allows for the public to know what is happening in Alaska, much like we see with information released on COVID, people will know overall numbers and regions just not names or animal identifications. In the event of a threat to the public or animal health, sharing information to those necessary to mitigate the threat will also happen.

The Alaska Farm Bureau appreciates your support for protecting personal and business information for our farmers and ranchers and your sponsorship of SB 223.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Mudge".

Scott Mudge, President
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