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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 9, 2026

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PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association (SDCA) fully supports Governor Larry Rhoden’s decision today to veto House Bill 1077, legislation that would have classified cell-cultivated proteins as an “adulterated food.” SDCA applauds the Governor for taking a principled stance against this government overreach.

“HB 1077 was bad public policy from the beginning,” said SDCA President Craig Bieber. “It compromised the integrity of our food-safety systems and created legal contradictions. Cell-cultivated products are no competition to real beef raised by real producers, and consumers do not need the government to tell them that.”

South Dakota has already taken clear and effective steps to address emerging protein products. In 2025, lawmakers passed HB 1022, which established straightforward labeling requirements for cell-cultured protein products, ensuring transparency for consumers. That same year, HB 1118 was enacted to prohibit the use of state funds for research, production, promotion, sale, or distribution of cell-cultured protein. Those laws protect South Dakota taxpayers, consumers, and cattle producers without exposing the state to costly litigation. HB 1077 went far beyond labeling by classifying these products as “adulterated,” a term reserved under state law for food that is poisonous, filthy, or unsafe. Applying that label to a product that must meet federal inspection and safety standards does not strengthen food safety; it undermines the very inspection system that protects the credibility of real beef.

SDCA remains committed to advocating for policies that support South Dakota cattle producers, maintain a fair marketplace, and ensure consumers continue to have access to the highest-quality beef in the world.

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