_____, 2024

Senate of Canada

Ottawa, AB

KlA 0A4

Attention: The Honourable _____

Re: Bill C-293, An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness

Dear Honourable _____ ,

On behalf of _____ , I am writing you to express our concerns and opposition to Bill C-293 -An Act Respecting Pandemic Prevention and Preparedness which is currently before the senate.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a significant issue that Canadians and our governments had to endure and overcome. Although we can agree on the need for governments to plan more effectively for future pandemics, We believe that Bill C-293 raises concerns of unnecessary regulation and requires further scrutiny and clarification before it is enacted.

Section 3(2)(1) of the Bill suggests regulation over "commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including animal agriculture," and the promotion of "commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins". These statements are extremely vague and leave the door open for broad interpretations that have little scientific backing. When legislation is promoted without specific definitions, it risks undue government intervention. These statements do not have a place in legislation regarding pandemic preparedness.

Canada's agricultural sector currently implements rigorous biosecurity standards to prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases - diseases that can be spread between animals and humans- and demonstrates responsible stewardship. Within animal agriculture there

are already established protocols that exemplify the proactive measures in place to manage health risks, such as the Canadian On-Farm Beef Cattle Biosecurity Standard. These biosecurity measures are in place to protect Canada's animal agriculture from external zoonotic threats and protect Canada's food security. The language of Bill C-293 inaccurately implies that Canada's animal agriculture is a threat to Canadians and is unable to manage health risks.

Animal agriculture supports rural economies and food security in Canada. Alberta's livestock industry contributed approximately $10 Billion to the economy in 2023; federally, the livestock industry contributed over $31 billion. This represents the livelihood of a significant number of farm families, a significant contribution to local food supply and an important economic contributor to our rural and remote communities. Efforts to phase out activities without concrete evidence of their risks could harm sectors like pork, poultry, and beef production, which employ thousands and feed millions.

In times of pandemic crisis, food security for Canada is essential. Legislation which could put food security at risk needs to be carefully written and considered to ensure that all food products are safe for Canadians. As it currently stands, the language of Bill C-293 is extremely vague and lacks the details necessary to understand the full implications to both our agricultural community as well as the consumers of Canada's robust and secure food system.

We would ask that as the Deputy Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, you urge your fellow senators to consider the consequences on the source and stability of Canada's food system that Bill C-293 could create if passed as it currently stands.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter. We trust that you will consider these concerns as you deliberate on the contents of Bill C-293.

Sincerely

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