

**House Committee on Agriculture  
Member Day Hearing  
Honorable Roger Williams (TX-25) Testimony**

Thank you, Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Scott, for the opportunity to speak today, and thank you to all the members of the Committee on Agriculture for the work you do to support our farmers and ranchers.

As the representative for Texas' 25<sup>th</sup> District I am honored to represent many farms and ranches, many of whom reach out to me regularly about issues important to them. Today, I join you to discuss what we can all agree is an important issue facing not just the agriculture industry but the entire country.

Members of this committee and many Americans are likely familiar with plant-based imitation meats such as chicken, and ground beef, all of which appear impressively similar to traditional meat products but are made with ingredients like soy and wheat. While plant-based products have grown in popularity over the last decade, there has been a concerning lack of oversight on the labeling of such products, causing confusion among consumers.

To add to this confusion, earlier this year the FDA and USDA approved the sale of cell-cultivated chicken, better known as “lab grown poultry”. While this process still new and is time intensive and expensive, Congress should learn from its lack of oversight on plant-based imitation meat products and consider forward thinking protection for consumers from those who wish to manipulate them through misleading labeling.

As Chairman of the House Committee on Small Business and owner and operator of a car dealership in Texas for over 52 years, I understand the need to ensure that consumers are given all the information needed to make informed decisions while not interfering with the free market.

We are a country of competition - of risk and reward - and the federal government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers. We must let competition drive innovation and allow individuals and businesses to choose the product that best suits their needs.

There are extensive guidelines and regulations surrounding the labeling and marketing of traditional meat-based products by the FDA and USDA. Through the requirement of accurate and honest labeling of imitation

and lab-grown products we create a level playing field and support a free market in the agricultural industry.

I am working diligently alongside your committee member, Congressman Alford, who also serves on the House Committee on Small Business, to ensure that as the imitation and lab grown product industry grows, the American people and our ranching and farming communities are not taken advantage of.

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Scott, and members of the esteemed Committee on Agriculture, thank you again for allowing me to join you today. I look forward to working with each of you to support our farmers and ranchers and tackling this important issue.

In God we trust.