

Washington, DC — Today Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) again called on Congress to pass H.R. 2519, “The Downed Animal Protection Act.” This legislation would make permanent the recent provision enacted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to prohibit downed animals from entering the food supply. Downed animals are those too sick or injured to stand or walk.

“The federal government has been missing in action when it comes to protecting consumers from receiving tainted meat,” said Blumenauer. “As a result, through no fault of their own, small businesses in my congressional district are threatened. People have been laid off because Congress blinked, missing the opportunity to protect our meat supply and reassure consumer confidence.

“It’s stunning that 100 years after Upton Sinclair’s ‘Jungle,’—a shocking story about America’s meat packing industry—we still permit downed animals in our food. Congress and the USDA need to start protecting American consumers, not just large agribusiness interests. Continuing to process these animals for human consumption is unacceptable. Perhaps the reason we have not found mad cow disease before is because the American consumer is eating the evidence.

Blumenauer reaffirmed his support for legislation to increase testing of animals before entering the food chain and for a tracking system to trace meat products from their animal sources to the consumer.