

Support OLPS Oppose the Self Amendment

Letter to the Members of the House of Representatives,

We, the undersigned organizations, businesses, and associations strongly support the Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards (OLPS) rule and oppose the Self Amendment offered to H.R. 4368. Preventing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) from Issuing a final rule on OLPS will negatively impact animal health, erode consumer confidence in the organic label, and prevent the application of clear, consistent, and enforceable regulations for the organic livestock sector.

Organic represents one of the fastest-growing food and farming sectors in the U.S. and global marketplace, reaching over \$67 billion in U.S. annual sales. The benefits of organic are numerous. Organic provides economic opportunities for farmers, creating jobs and lifting rural economies, while also utilizing sustainable farming practices that are proven to help mitigate the threat of climate change. Organic provides a safe, healthy choice to consumers who are increasingly seeking out the trusted USDA Organic seal on the food and products they purchase for their families.

Current USDA organic standards already require outdoor access and appropriate living conditions for poultry and livestock. Unfortunately, these regulations have not been consistently enforced, resulting in some large poultry companies utilizing narrow, enclosed porches instead of true outdoor access to meet this requirement. OLPS clarifies the standards for animal living conditions to require true outdoor access and room to roam for all poultry operations.

A vast majority of organic farms and businesses are already meeting the standard. Without the clarifications in the proposed rule, these organic producers will continue experiencing a direct competitive disadvantage and be forced to add unnecessarily duplicative third-party certifications to differentiate their products.

Again, we strongly support the Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards proposed rule and urge members of the House of Representatives to oppose the Self Amendment.