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Gov. Nixon signs Omnibus Crimes Bill to increase consequences for cattle theft

(Columbia, Mo.) – Gov. Jay Nixon signed House Bill 62 on the morning of July 9, 2009 at the State Highway Patrol Headquarters Crimes Lab in Jefferson City, Mo. This law will go into effect August 28, 2009.

Steve Willard, president of Missouri Cattlemen's Association, applauds Gov. Nixon for signing the bill. "This is a big step for cattle producers around the state. It is great to see an issue so important to our members be just as important to our governor and legislators. This is a prime example of MCA membership impacting MCA policy."

This bill, also known as the Omnibus Crimes Bill, raises the penalty for cattle theft from a class C to a class B felony, which requires a sentence of 5-15 years in prison. It will also require the convicted persons to serve a minimum of 80% of their sentence.

Under this bill, veterinarians must open any record of the livestock to be inspected by the department of agriculture to determine the origin and destination of that animal.

Cattle theft has become a large problem in Missouri. Since 2004, over 3,300 head of cattle have been stolen and over \$1.2 million in property, panels, 4 wheelers, trucks, trailers, and cattle have been stolen.

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The Missouri Cattlemen's Association was initiated in 1911 and is dedicated to improving viability of Missouri's beef industry. MCA serves as the voice of Missouri's 65,000 beef producers. Contact MCA at 573-499-9162 or at www.mocattle.com.