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Braley Requested Staff Access to Ensure Transparency of ICE Activities in Wake of Postville Raid

Washington, May 14 - Late this morning three aides from the office of Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) were given a tour of the temporary detention and processing facility at the National Cattle Congress grounds by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other federal officials in the wake of Monday's raid in Postville.

Braley requested the staff tour late yesterday in a letter to federal officials on the ground in Iowa.

Braley's District Director Pete DeKock, Caseworker John Murphy, and Communications Director Jeff Giertz participated in the tour. The group viewed the federal facilities at the Electric Ballroom (court), Estel Hall (detainee temporary housing area), and Pepsi Arena (attorney facilities).

Rep. Braley released the following statement:

"Yesterday, I sent a letter to federal officials requesting that members of my staff be granted access to the Cattle Congress detention and processing facility. I requested the tour to promote public transparency into ICE's activities in the wake of Monday's raid in Postville. Unfortunately, I'm unable to tour the facility myself today because I need to be in Washington to cast votes on the Farm Bill.

"Three members of my staff toured the facility with federal officials this morning. After completing their tour, they briefed me.

"My aides report that federal officials at the Cattle Congress are conducting a professional operation. Detainees are only being housed at the Cattle Congress grounds until their preliminary hearing, at which point they will be moved to other detention facilities. Officials with the US District Court, Northern District of Iowa told my staff that they expect proceedings to continue at the Cattle Congress grounds into next week.

"Naturally, the sheer number of arrests made by ICE during Monday's raid raises questions about Agriprocessors, Inc.'s knowledge of possible violations of employment and immigration law. Federal officials would not comment on the possibility of an investigation into Agriprocessors for possible violations of the law."