

mink rancher into consideration and provide them with the relief they so badly need.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. We appreciate your bringing to us your thoughts, Mr. Galifianakis.

The next witness is our colleague from North Dakota, the Honorable Thomas S. Kleppe. Mr. Kleppe, we appreciate having you with us and you are recognized.

STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS S. KLEPPE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. KLEPPE. Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I appreciate the opportunity of testifying on a problem that is having disastrous effects on the American mink rancher. I applaud the concern of this committee in taking a close look at the problems facing the domestic mink industry.

Last fall I introduced H.R. 13181, a bill to place a yearly quota on mink imports that are in competition with domestic production. At that time the price American mink farmers received for their product had been driven down drastically by the ever-increasing amount of mink imports. The situation is now even more critical, as is obvious when one considers that the total amount of foreign mink imports is over 50 percent of the American market.

Under the bill I have introduced, a quota, based on domestic consumption, would be placed on imports of whole skins, whether dressed or not. The bill would also establish a 50-percent ad valorem duty on mink imports in excess of the quota allotment.

These price-depressing mink imports must be curbed immediately. I see no reason to allow our domestic mink ranchers to be forced out of production by this tide of mink pelts entering the country. The last 6 months have witnessed the failure of over 1,000 mink producers. Passage of my bill would aid in reducing that trend. I urge the committee to give H.R. 13181 favorable consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Kleppe, for bringing to us your thoughts. Are there any questions?

The Honorable Philip E. Ruppe, of Michigan, is our next witness. Welcome, sir, you are recognized.

STATEMENT OF HON. PHILIP E. RUPPE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. RUPPE. Mr. Chairman, the 11th District of Michigan, which I am proud to represent, is one of the major mink producing areas in the State of Michigan. I am here today to urge the committee to take favorable action on my bill, H.R. 10301, which would provide the ranchers in my district and in the United States some degree of relief from the floodtide of mink pelt imports which are forcing domestic ranchers out of the business.

As has been pointed out to the committee by a number of witnesses, foreign mink, largely from the Scandinavian countries have been coming into the United States in such quantities and at such prices the domestic rancher just can't compete. I have been told that the mink