



For Immediate Release
December 3, 2010

Contact: Scott Mulhauser/Erin Shields
(202) 224-4515

**BAUCUS DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED WITH ANNOUNCEMENT ON KOREA TRADE
DEAL, COMMITS TO KEEP FIGHTING FOR AMERICAN RANCHERS**

Finance Chair has long worked to end unscientific ban on U.S. beef

Washington DC - Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today expressed deep disappointment following the Administration's announcement on the U.S. – Korea free trade agreement (FTA). Baucus has long fought for the interests of American ranchers in discussions on the agreement.

"I am deeply disappointed that today's deal fails to address Korea's significant barriers to American beef exports, which President Obama identified this June as one of the critical outstanding issues that must be resolved before moving this free trade agreement forward," said Baucus. **"I am deeply committed to righting this wrong and will work with the Administration in the period ahead to ensure that America's ranchers and farmers are not left behind. I will reserve judgment on the free trade agreement until then."**

Senator Baucus has long called for the United States and Korea to negotiate a FTA to expand bilateral economic ties. The two countries entered into a FTA on June 30, 2007, but failed to adequately address longstanding concerns about Korea's restrictions on U.S. beef and auto exports. In April 2008, Korea agreed to open its market to all ages and cuts of U.S. beef, consistent with international scientific standards. But Korea continues to limit imports to U.S. beef from cattle under 30 months. On June 26, 2010, President Obama and President Lee agreed to resolve U.S. concerns regarding barriers to U.S. beef and auto exports. Baucus has sought assurances that Korea is committed to a road map to accept U.S. beef from cattle of all ages.

The Senate Finance Committee has exclusive jurisdiction over international trade.

###