

the Solari Report

Food Series: Tales from the Congressional Front
with Representative Thomas Massie

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Transcript



Catherine Austin Fitts: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to a very special *Solari Report*. Today, we have Congressman Thomas Massie. I don't need to tell you a lot about him. He's been here on the *Solari Report* five times. I thought it was six, but he has been pushed back two times. That's seven times because we think a pushback is a hero, too. He has been a *Hero of the Week* in one way or another. Seven times, Congressman. He hails from Kentucky's fourth congressional district. He's been in the congress since 2012. We can't believe he manages to maintain a state of amusement. We're going to ask him about how he does that and manages to keep wonderful good manners. In addition, we'll get to that towards the end. Congressman Massie, we're so glad you're here. We want to start with food. Of course, my co-host, Pete Kennedy, who runs the *Food Series* on the *Solari Report*, we have been tracking your PRIME Act, and we're very interested to hear what's happening with the PRIME Act and what we can do to help.

Pete, why don't I have you join us? Welcome, Congressman Massie. Let's dive in with food in the PRIME Act. How's it going?

Pete Kennedy: Tom, I know about a year ago, you could have been more optimistic of this getting in the Farm Bill. What I'll say is congratulations so far. If you could give the listeners and readers just a brief description of the PRIME Act and the version of the PRIME Act that is currently in the House Farm Bill.

Thomas Massie: I always have to be careful. It's like the football that Lucy's holding for Charlie Brown. The only time I ever lose my sense of amused detachment is when I get my hopes up. My mental coping mechanism for Congress is to keep a sense of amused detachment. Basically, the best way to explain it is the place is so messed up, and you try to deny that you're any part of it, but in fact, you're in the middle of it. It's an out-of-body experience way of coping with this.

The PRIME Act was conceived on Joel Salatin's farm (Polyface in Virginia) on a hay wagon. It was Frank Niceley's (Senator from Tennessee) idea, who deserves to be *Hero of the Week* several weeks in a row for coming up with this idea in 2015. The idea was that right now, you can share half an animal; two families can buy an animal and have it butchered, and the Feds won't throw you in jail for undertaking that transaction as long as it's done in live units of the animal. The PRIME Act says, "You know what, we're going to let you sell meat by the cut. You don't have to buy a whole animal or half an animal, and you don't have

to comply with this oppressive federal inspection regime as long as you're in compliance with your state rules and you keep the transaction within a state." If the farmer and the butcher and the consumer are all in the same state, the PRIME Act says, "We're keeping the feds out of it." That's what the PRIME Act would do.

We picked up a lot of co-sponsors during COVID. Typically, I used to have about 25 co-sponsors. Then we got 50 co-sponsors when COVID struck because we saw that there really is a crisis in this country of a lack of processing capability; our food supply is very brittle. That was a big 'shot in the arm'. Then we heard President Biden acknowledge this problem in a State of the Union Address one year. I couldn't believe it. I'm sitting in Congress, and he says, "We got a monopoly of four meat companies, and they're processing 85%." It's like he was given one of my speeches at Polyface or something, but he didn't propose an answer. I thought, "We got the answer. We got the PRIME Act."

The problem here is how do you get anything passed? Objects at rest tend to stay at rest. All of this forward momentum, frankly, is due to outside pressure, where people who watch the *Solari Report* and they call their congressman and say, "Get your 'butt in gear' and co-sponsor the PRIME Act." We picked up many sponsors because of outside pressure. The Farm Bill, I noticed, which comes up every six years or so was coming up again. I remembered in 2014, when I teamed up with a couple of Democrats, Jared Polis, and Earl Blumenauer, and got a hemp amendment on the Farm Bill because Jared Polis was on the Rules Committee, and there was no hemp amendment in the Farm Bill in 2014. Jared Polis said, "Well, I'll try to get it offered as an amendment on the floor of the House. I'm on the Rules Committee." Jared Polis is now the Governor of Colorado. I said, "Well, do you think you can pull that off?" He said, "Oh, it's worth a try." He got a version of my Industrial Hemp Bill offered as an amendment on the Farm Bill in 2014. It passed on the floor of the House, thanks to outside pressure. Then when it was conferenced with the Senate, it became law.

I thought back to, "Okay, can we replicate that?" I got on the Rules Committee, which is almost unheard of. Why would you put a radical like Massie on the Rules Committee? It's too much to get into, but that was part of the condition of Kevin McCarthy becoming Speaker, that he changed the composition of these committees here and sprinkled the radicals among the committees instead

of putting them all on Oversight Committee or some committee that nobody knows about; the Broom Closet Committee.

I went to the chairman of the Ag committee, GT Thompson. His main mission is to get the Farm Bill passed, and he had to get the Farm Bill passed. I said, "Listen, we could try to do this in the Rules Committee after the perfect Farm Bill comes out of your committee, but I'd rather work with you now and see if we can get some version of the PRIME Act offered when you mark up the Farm Bill in your Ag Committee." He said, "Instead of doing that, why don't we just hammer out the language and try to get something in the base bill of the Farm Bill?" I'm like, "That's even better."

Fitts: Oh, that's fabulous.

Massie: Actually, Pete Kennedy is a good attorney; he knows the answer. That's why he asked the question, but the answer was thanks to Pete Kennedy, we were able to try to hammer out a compromise with the big Ag folks who dominate the Farm Bill. Remember our proposition was that we don't want to cause you problems with the Farm Bill; we want to make it so that you get more votes for the Farm Bill when it comes to the floor. We worked on this bill. We called it the sub-PRIME Act instead of the PRIME Act. We want people to think it's about banking, and then everybody will be for it. It's not about banking; it's about processing revival interstate meat exemption; that's what PRIME Act stands for. If you look at the Farm Bill that came out of the Ag committee, which was recently reported out. It's on page 800 and has something of our sub-PRIME Act. It's a pilot program; it doesn't last forever. You can do it in every state, but you can only have a few processors that do it at the beginning. If it works out, they'll expand the number of processors who can basically practice the PRIME Act. Ostensibly, it doesn't apply to restaurants or to grocery stores, but we'll take one 'bite at the apple' right now. That would allow meat to be sold by the cut using local inspectors who are complying with local inspections, and it'd be huge; this would be huge.

Fitts: When do you think the Farm Bill is likely to pass?

Massie: You have to manage your expectations. What happened is they threw out our Speaker of the House, who was also helpful in me having a say in the Farm Bill. It was sad to see Kevin McCarthy go because he did work in good faith with conservatives and people like me. When he left, they said, "Oh, well,

here we are. It's the fall of '23." Then it was December of '23, and they said there are so many farm policies, mostly related to crop insurance and things like that, which is a euphemism for subsidies; they needed the certainty of a one-year Farm Bill in order for people to plant crops. Once you get into January, February, March, you have to start thinking about that. They passed a one-year extension to the Farm Bill in December, which basically takes the pressure off to do a Farm Bill, which was disappointing to me. I don't think they're going to address the Farm Bill.

Even though they've passed it out of the House, Ag Committee hasn't come to the floor of the House yet. It may pass the floor of the House, but I think the Senate is going to wait and see what happens in November. I think they're hoping that Democrats win the majority in the House, and then instead of GT Thompson, it would be a Democrat who can write the Farm Bill. If they can 'run the tables' in November and get a Democrat in the White House, a Democrat-controlled Senate, and Democrat-controlled House, they'll write whatever Farm Bill they want.

They're not averse; the Democrats aren't against the PRIME Act. Many of the sponsors of this, in fact, my co-lead on this is a Democrat, Chellie Pingree from Maine, and Rand Paul is the co-sponsor, but the lead sponsor in the Senate is Senator Angus King. He has the perfect name to lead a bill like the PRIME Act; he is an independent who caucuses with the Democrats.

Let's say the status quo stays the same regardless of who's in the White House. Let's say in the November elections, we keep the House and they take the Senate; they keep the Senate. There's still a good chance to get the PRIME Act in because what the Republicans and Democrats are arguing over right now between the House and the Senate has nothing to do with the PRIME Act. They are arguing over how large the food stamp program will be, for instance.

Kennedy: You mentioned that the states are going to administer the program; it's up to them to adopt the program. If they don't adopt it, there's a small number of facilities USDA can approve around the country, but each state would be lucky to have one facility. I know you've been through this before with the Hemp Bill. It was the same thing, right?

Massie: Yes.

Kennedy: It was states adopting the hemp program. We all want to know how do you convince your State Department of Agriculture to pick it up because most State Departments of Agriculture don't want the extra work, they might be short on personnel? What's the formula?

Massie: In any state that adopts this, farmers are going to prosper and instead of seeing your small farms disappear and JBS and Tyson and Cargill and Smithfield and whatnot become the overseers of all your farmers, this is a chance if you are an ag commissioner. That's what we call our head ag person in Kentucky, but it may be a different name in other states, or a state legislature. The state legislature could do this by a law, but an ag commissioner could adopt it. My argument would be, "Look, your farmers are going to prosper under this program. You might as well go ahead and try it."

To carry this analogy, in 2014, we had the Farm Bill that enabled a pilot program for hemp and all of those had to be through a State Department of Agriculture or through a university; that was the limitation. Many states recognized the economic opportunity and they adopted it. Then the hemp program was expanded again in the next Farm Bill. I didn't have anything to do with that. I had moved on to other things and that wasn't part of my portfolio. Since I brought up hemp, I'm obligated to say there is one troubling provision in the new Farm Bill where they're trying to rein in hemp again now. We'll see how that all 'washes out'.

The reason I went through that is to tell you that we got a pilot program for the Hemp Bill for hemp in 2014, and then it expanded in the next Farm Bill because people did adopt it, the states recognized there was an opportunity. It's like eBay or Amazon. The first state that moves on this is going to be the center of attention and have the center of gravity and be successful and the processing will flourish there. I think the same thing goes with this. States should be competing, and if they are, the states that don't adopt this are going to get left behind and be relegated to the corporate meat industrial complex.

Fitts: I'll tell you from what I've seen of the *Solari* subscribers or the Weston Price or CHD people, you have a huge number of consumers who will push hard for this and are politically active because you've trained them on raw milk.

Massie: Let me prepare people: A lot of life is managing expectations and some people are going to look at this language and say, "This is not good enough." I

would remind them that it is so hard to get anything done in Congress, especially when it's the right thing, and especially when there's no giant lobby pushing it. Just getting this sub-PRIME Act, as I call it, in the Farm Bill is almost a coup. It was a convergence of many factors that allowed this to happen that got us to here. I think people get an appetite for this program, and one more pun; it'll be 'hard to kill it'.

Kennedy: The food, at least in the Weston Price circles, that's in the news more than any other, is raw milk. Because of the bird flu, every day, I get about a half dozen stories on my news feed about state agencies and media warning not to drink raw milk because it might be contaminated with bird flu. In the meantime, demand is higher than ever. What's your take on all this; everything that's transpired the last few months on this?

Massie: If you fell for this after COVID, I'm sorry, you're hopeless in a civic engagement sense. Would you please just not vote? Everybody says, "Oh, we have to get out to vote." I'm going to tell you not to go vote if you're going to fall for bird flu after COVID. Then I'll tell you that I'm practicing what I preach. I had my raw milk this morning. I'm here in DC, but I bring it from Kentucky and I drink it every day and I'm not going to slow down because some notice came out from the FDA. I saw this notice. Here's what they do. Congress hasn't passed a law, okay, and you know this.

Kennedy: Right.

Massie: They haven't passed a law, but what happens, just like with what happened with COVID, Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx went around to every state. Now, Ron DeSantis banned them from meeting with officials in the state of Florida, but they met with officials in all 49 states and they put out statements that have the imprimatur of the federal government. So the FDA says you should do this; you should social distance, you should shut down your economy. Even though President Trump never said to shut down the economy, his agencies were saying to do it and even though Congress never passed a law saying to shut down the economy, the boards of health in the various states are looking at these documents and are saying, "Not only do we have the imprimatur of the federal government to do this, we may be exposed to liability if we don't follow the FDA guidelines. Somebody may sue us for not doing these things." That's the problem; the bureaucrats have a lot of power when they issue a letter, and that's what they've done; they've encouraged-the FDA

has- in a recent two-page letter encouraged State Departments of Agriculture and various regulating agencies at the state level to basically ban as much raw milk as they can. We need to push back and ignore that.

Kennedy: I think part of the pushback is, after the latest bird flu fear-mongering started, you reintroduced your Raw Milk Bill, the Interstate Milk Freedom Act. If you could tell the listeners and readers about that.

Massie: This one's modeled actually after a 1986 gun law called the McClure-Volkmer Act which says if you have a firearm in Kentucky and you want to go to Florida and it's legal to possess that firearm in Kentucky and legal to possess it in Florida, they can't arrest you or stop you in any of the intervening states. It's not a crime to take a gun from a legally owned jurisdiction to another jurisdiction where it's legal to have that gun. I thought, "If we can do that for guns, we can do that for milk, right?" My Raw Milk Bill is a very modest proposal. I'm not trying to countermand any state law. In fact, it says if it's legal in state A and it's legal in state B, you can travel from state A to state B with the milk and do interstate commerce. We're not going to send the FDA in to confiscate your milk products and arrest your cows.

Kennedy: I think one of the key developments in getting the PRIME Act moving was the hearing you held a year ago in your subcommittee and having Joel Salatin testify. That really got things going I think in the right direction.

Massie: There's the oligopoly solution where the big meat packers control, and then there's this other path, which is farmers selling directly to consumers, but they have to sell them the animal. These custom slaughterhouses exist because of one exemption right now which are hundreds of thousands of custom slaughterhouses. The farmer can sell the consumer a whole animal or half an animal. The problem with that is it's regressive. How many families can afford to buy 500 pounds of meat? That's the only alternative that exists. The PRIME Act seeks to expand that alternate path that hasn't made anybody sick, and it's made many more people healthier.

I would like Mr. Salatin to talk about sustainability, affordability, traceability, and safety.

Joel Salatin: On sustainability, one of the beauties of offering this kind of choice to the consuming populace is that it does actually create options for

farmers and consumers who want to opt out of whatever the system is. Whether it's like the Gunthorpe family that opted out-I don't mean to 'hit' you-whether you opt out of the industrial pork system, or whether it's a consumer who's wanting to opt out of Walmart. The opt-out option creates a sustainability because it's about resilience. When fertilizer, for example, on our farm jumped up 400%, or when Putin invaded Ukraine, we didn't miss a beat because we don't buy any of it.

Affordability is a big one because as you mentioned, not only does the current system require large volume buying, the average American now can't put their hand on \$400, so they can't buy volumes. It's quite difficult, but because of the overhead and paperwork costs of inspection, it artificially elevates the price of food. A custom house operating at a much lower capitalization cost for infrastructure-a lower paperwork cost-can actually do what a federal inspected plant does for, let's just say a dollar, it can do it for \$0.75. That cost gets passed on to the product.

Suddenly, we have a sustainable, secure food supply. Does anybody think if we have 300,000 smaller plants accessing the country instead of 300 mega plants during COVID, we would have had a less of a 'hiccup' in the food system if we'd had 300,000 plants instead of 300. Affordability is a big deal. Traceability is another one. Right now, a typical burger at a burger joint has pieces of 600 animals in it. If anybody thinks that all those 600 animals in a burger at McDonald's is traceable, I've got a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you. The problem is, I think we built this system, and we have a trust in this system that's actually let us down; it's not working.

One of the things you notice with all these recalls is what's the first thing a CEO says as soon as they've got a product recall? "We've complied with everything." The big industry hides behind the 'skirts' of the inspection service all the time. A place like mine, we don't have any skirts to hide behind. If we sell bad chicken or bad beef or bad pork chops, it comes back on us. We're held hostage by this system that I've already said measures their efficacy in pounds per inspector personnel hour. I didn't know that they were measuring efficacy by pounds per hour; I thought it was about safe food.

The whole thing is incentivized to be prejudicial to small farmers. That's why we need some sort of option that allows a parallel universe to exist because that's the only way you can actually create competition and accountability within the

monopoly.

Massie: Thank you, Mr. Salatin.

Kennedy: I think you've mentioned briefly having a similar hearing on raw milk, because yes, there are so many factors at work between the industry, the pricing system, which is so unfair to the conventional industry. This law that never went through Congress bans raw milk and interstate commerce.

Massie: Yes, I want to do that. There are so many hearings I want to have. The subcommittee ' they let me have the 'steering wheel' of- the gavel- is the anti-trust subcommittee, but it also has jurisdiction over regulatory reform and the administrative state. At first, I didn't even want to chair a subcommittee on anti-trust, but when I realized we had jurisdiction over the administrative state, I was like, "Whoa, we have jurisdiction over what? 98% of government is the administrative state. Congress gives them an inch and they take a mile."

We see this everywhere. I've had some very interesting hearings on the meat processing industry. Not only is that the administrative state, it's also anti-trust, which is very much at the center of this committee that I serve on. You have four companies that have monopolized meat processing in the United States. It was well within the jurisdiction of my committee, even though my committee is a subcommittee of judiciary, not agriculture. I was able to have this hearing on what's fundamentally an agricultural issue. I could probably do the same thing on raw milk. I have several hearings, though, in the pipeline; so many things.

When you're dealing with the administrative state, one hearing that I'm going to have is on the FDA, and the fact that when they went from an EUA, emergency use authorization, to biologic license application, i.e., the license, so that they could mandate the vaccines, they skipped steps, ignored the science, and fired the scientists who had been doing this for 30 years because they weren't giving them the policy answers they wanted.

I hope big pharma is not listening or reading your *Solari Report* today because they're going to be like, "Oh, my gosh, let's get ready for Massie." These things are in the pipeline. I've got a hearing on pharmacy benefit managers I want to do. At some point, I'd like to cover raw milk, and the fact that Congress never passed a law authorizing any three-letter agency to ban or restrict raw milk. They're perverting some existing law from long ago that deals with adulterated

milk, and it's a result of a lawsuit in the '80s as part of the settlement, and the FDA said, "Okay, we'll start regulating raw milk now." That's not how you make laws or legislation in this country. That would be a great topic to cover.

Kennedy: Right.

Massie: We'll 'milk' this committee for all it's worth.

Kennedy: So far, it's been about as successful as alcohol prohibition, from what I can see.

Massie: It's easier to get oxycodone in any county or city than it is to get raw milk in Kentucky. I can tell you that.

Kennedy: One other thing you put out there in your Twitter (X) the last few months is a constitutional amendment. You had plenty of interest in it. Briefly, what is it? You keep teasing us. We thought you were going to introduce it. What's the status?

Massie: I've crowdsourced it at Polyface, and I found out I had a flaw in it, so I had to fix one word. I'll get into that. Basically, it was Wickard v. Filburn. I think Roscoe Filburn is the one who got 'screwed' in the Supreme Court decision where they said he was growing wheat or some kind of grain. Even though it wasn't involved in interstate commerce, the fact that he was growing it and feeding it to his animals was affecting interstate commerce because it was a grain that wasn't sold in interstate commerce. It was this contorted decision of the Supreme Court which has led to many other bad things and a lot of overreaches of the federal government.

Senator Mike Lee has suggested that I call this constitutional food freedom amendment, Roscoe Filburn's Revenge. I'm sure he's long since passed, but he still deserves to be justified in his fight; avenged, I should say. It says basically, the federal government will not restrict private agreements between individuals. You have the right to grow food. Nobody can stop you from doing that, and you have the right to buy the food of your choice. That seems just blatantly obvious to me, and it should be covered under the 9th and 10th Amendments to the Constitution, but it's not. I think it's a good way of pushing back against the overreach.

It's going to be harder to pass a constitutional amendment than it is to pass a

bill, and a bill is hard to pass in and of itself. The word that I had to change that I have in this constitutional amendment was the word 'regulate' in a pejorative sense; in a restrictive-like sense. When in fact if you go back to the Second Amendment and well-regulated militia, what they meant when they said that, the word regulated meant well-maintained. I had used the word regulate in what's more the modern sense in my constitutional Food Freedom Amendment that the government can't regulate.

Somebody pointed that out to me after one of my speeches. I came back and changed the word in it. Like, "Dang, I got to go through this whole process again." He was right.

Kennedy: What's the new word you have in there?

Massie: Restrict. As an attorney, I think you may think of some other words to use.

Kennedy: The key is just getting FDA and USDA out of interstate commerce because if restrict means the same thing you and I think regulate means, that means all these laws like the Wholesome Meat Act and the Food Safety Modernization Act, at least part of those is repealed, so people are in business.

Massie: I don't have the exact text of the amendment, but we'll get it introduced. I promise, but we'll need a big push for co-sponsorships. Anybody running for state office, because the states have to ratify a constitutional amendment, this is your chance now to ask any state legislator or governor candidate, "Would you ratify this amendment if it passes Congress?"

Kennedy: What was interesting when you put that out on Twitter (X), many people posted comments saying, "Don't we already have this right?"

Massie: We do have this right.

Kennedy: It doesn't look like it to me; it's not being recognized, that's for sure.

Massie: This was the dilemma when they talked about the Bill of Rights, whether they should even enumerate some of the rights because the Constitution is a restriction on government. If you start listing rights, then the implication, if you don't understand the Ninth Amendment, is that might be the exhaustive list of your rights. The Ninth Amendment says, "There are all the

other rights you have too. These are just a set of examples." That should have been good enough to know that you have the right to grow your own food or to buy food. It was so obvious that the founding fathers didn't think to include that because it would have seemed ridiculous back in the day. Now I think, unfortunately, if you don't list them, they will go away, even though those rights are inherent to you as a human being.

Kennedy: Maybe this will put some light back in the Ninth Amendment, too, because the courts don't exactly regard that as saying a great deal these days.

Massie: We're going to make the Ninth Amendment great again, and we're also going to reign in the Commerce Clause.

Kennedy: That's the bill, in addition to providing constitutional protection to the right to food, reigns in the Commerce Clause, so it's two for one; two in one package. The big issue right now is the electronic id mandate for cattle and bison and interstate commerce. I think you called it CBDCs for cattle.

Massie: The left wants to ban cattle. Before you can ban anything, you need a registry; you need to know where it is and who owns it. That's why they want to tag cattle. We've seen it happen in Europe. On the right, you have some cronies who stand to make some money from the ear tags. They're the ones who get the \$15 million earmark. It doesn't go to USDA; it's going to, "stakeholders". That is a code word for private entities getting a handout. They'll verticalize the industry with this; the big corporations. You talked about China. There are four corporations that control the meat processing in United States. One is owned by China and one is owned by Brazil. American ranchers will be working for those organizations if this tracking goes through because they'll verticalize the industry.

Kennedy: Shad, what's your response to this tracking of cattle? Are you concerned as well?

Shad Sullivan: Yes, I am. It is the key that opens the door to the end of independent producers across the country. It is a private property rights issue that we really have to consider here. When we start talking about RFID (Radio Frequency Identification, EID (eID Monitoring), and data monitoring of farmers and ranchers and their cattle herd size, we open up the door to what is going on in the European Union. Under the rules of sustainable development,

we know that the RFID has led to land seizure in the name of climate change. Once we open that door, there is no going back; they can monitor, measure, report, and verify everything that is occurring on your farm or ranch. Then maybe 'down the road', in the name of climate change, they can dictate to you the rules of their production, which is subjective from a third-party verification. It is extremely dangerous to private property rights; this is a liberty taker, not a liberty maker.

Massie: Central Bank Digital Currency for cattle: If you follow the Second Amendment debate to keep and bear arms, you probably know that in order for the government to confiscate something, they have to have a list of everybody who has it and where it's at. You have a coalition of bootleggers and Baptists who want to have these digital IDs. Now, the bootleggers, in this sense, are the meat industry; the people who are already making money off cattle. They want to corner the market. The Baptists, in this sense, are the leftists who don't want anybody eating meat. They would rather you eat bugs or tofu or some lab-grown thing; they don't want any livestock to exist.

These are the two groups that agree on the left and the crony right, I'll call it. They get together and say, "We need animal ID. We need to start tracking all these animals." As my friend Harriet Hageman from Wyoming points out-she's a representative there-this will cause a verticalization of the cattle industry just like we've seen in the poultry industry. They can have 83 requirements that you need to be in compliance with in order to have cattle on your farm. Your fences have to be so high off the ground to allow the wildlife to pass through, all these constraints, and all these crazy things where your animals must have this whole schedule of vaccines. They'll make the childhood vaccine schedule look benign.

If you don't comply with all of these things, they're going to stop you from selling your cattle at the point of sale. They're going to run a wand over your animal. If the serial number doesn't match up with a farm that's compliant, no sale, and destroy the animal. What will happen is nobody that doesn't have a whole team of lawyers and veterinarians and ecologists and environmentalists working on their farm will be able to be in compliance with all of these rules. The big companies; the big industrial meat complex, I call it, will come along and say, "Listen, just be a franchise of us. We'll either sell you the cattle or the embryos or whatever, and you raise them on your farm with our tags, and we'll pre-determine the price."

It's like it is with poultry. You basically will be the sucker into holding the bank loan. The American cattlemen ranchers will go away, and you'll be a wholly owned subsidiary of JBS (purchased Swift & Company and global food company) if they get this through, which they have. We offered an amendment to defund this in Congress last year. Harriet Hageman did and using my position on the Rules Committee, I made sure it got a vote, but our vote failed. We couldn't even get enough Republicans to oppose this. They say they're for a smaller government, but no, they just invited everybody on the farm.

Then again, the Farm Bureau was for this. Why did they end up on the wrong side of so many things? Because there was money involved, and the people who run these ear tags and make the ear tags, and people that make the equipment to scan the ear tags, control Farm Bureau more than the membership does. That's why you had lobbyists who pretended to be for farmers, and the National Cattleman Beef Associations for this. They're 'foxes guarding the hen house' here, and so we lost that vote, and now they're finalizing that rule. They'll start with you only need the tags to move cattle of a certain age in interstate commerce, but year after year, they will expand the number and type of animals that these ear tags must be put on. Eventually, they'll have them all tagged, except for honey bees.

Fitts: Is there anything we can do to stop this?

Massie: They would tag the honey bees if they could still fly with the tag in their wing. Is there anything you can do to stop?

Fitts: Can a state stop it from having it in its jurisdiction?

Massie: I think there should be lawsuits, just like they banned the pistol braces for firearms, and they banned bump stocks, and they banned other things by executive order, and by administrative rule-making, and then that brought on lawsuits. There's something called Chevron Deference. They basically give deference to administrative agencies in terms of rule-making that's been called into question. I think there can, and will be lawsuits from an attorneys general from the states, and for any farmer who has standing, which as soon as this rule goes into effect; you almost have to suffer from the rule before you have a case against the government. Somebody will eventually have standing to bring a lawsuit against the federal government, but maybe we can knock it down.

Fitts: If you look at the PRIME Act versus the tagging, it's really a war over whether small farmers and ranchers can have independent income because they're trying to wipe out the 'small guys'. What the PRIME Act is doing is helping the small farmers and ranchers get back in the act. If we're going to have local fresh food, we need many, many small and independent farmers and ranchers.

Massie: Absolutely. That's the only real way to have accountability if you can visit the farm, if you know the rancher, if you can walk into the processors, and they say, "Here, let me show you around back here." That's where accountability comes in. Some people say, "Oh, my gosh, your PRIME Act; what about the liability that's going to be on the farmer who sells directly to the consumer?" I'm like, "That's the whole point." They launder the liability through the USDA when they do this inspection process. They, either the slaughterhouse or the farmer, can make thousands of people sick and it's like, "Oh, well, it had the imprimatur of the US Government, had that stamp on it, we better blame the inspector, not the farmer or the processor." That is how people never get in trouble. I think there should be accountability, and it keeps everybody honest; small is accountable.

Fitts: Pete, I have to tell you before you open up on **Farmer Food**, on *Financial Rebellion*, Polly Tommey had promised her son, because they grow their own food, and get all of their food locally. Her son only wanted a pizza. Finally, she broke down and said, "Okay. We're going to go to the grocery store and we're going to buy a pizza." They went to the grocery store, and they couldn't find one pizza that didn't have on the label, "This Includes Bio-engineered Food." They gave up and never got a pizza. With that, I'll send you into **Farmer Food**.

Kennedy: One last thing, the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance has talked about a congressional resolution of disapproval, which they say can overturn a federal rule or nullify a federal rule. It seems like Congress has used that in the past. Are you familiar with that mechanism?

Massie: Yes, it's called the Congressional Review Act. It's an expedited way to keep them from killing the staffing of committees; it's an expedited way to counter-amend rule-making. Here's the catch, number one, the president has to sign it. All these agencies report to the president-the ones making the bad rules are working for the president-why would he counter-amend one of his political appointees at one of these agencies? The reality is, he won't, but if the

presidency changes, you might get the new president to sign a Congressional Review Act that revokes rule-making.

Here's the second catch: You have a window of opportunity. They were so sure that Hillary Clinton was going to win the election in 2016 that they did some rule-making inside of that window of opportunity, and assuming that Hillary would be the president. It turns out that Trump was the president, and we were able to use the Congressional Review Act to undo the things that Obama had done in the last six months of his presidency by rule-making. I do not know if this ear tag thing will fall in that window. One of my colleagues has suggested that we should adjourn Congress now for the rest of the year, and stop the clock so that we can capture more of those rules; the bureaucratic rules in the Congressional Review Act. Should we have a change in the White house, somebody may sign that. You can do some non-binding resolution in Congress. The problem with that is if it fails, now you've just endorsed the rule-making.

Then there is an opportunity on September 30th when all the funding for the government runs out. This is my complaint with Mike Johnson. If he had any fortitude, we would take a stand on dozens of these things, and say we're not going to fund the rule. You can withhold funding for a toner cartridge, and they can't print the rule, they can't do anything and nobody can know about it. You can withhold funding for any electricity that runs the website that promulgates this rule. They have no way to promulgate these rules if we explicitly prohibit funding for it in the funding bill that comes up September 30th.

Kennedy: That gets into **Farmer Food** because when they were deliberating the Agricultural Appropriations Bill, you introduced an amendment that I think passed on edible vaccines; only prohibiting federal research funding for that "food".

Massie: My amendment, which states that none of the funds made available by this Act may be used to fund any grant related to any transgenic edible vaccine. Does the term transgenic edible vaccine sound far-fetched? It's not because we're funding it. In fact, scientists from the University of California Riverside, funded with your taxpayer dollars, have been studying whether they can turn edible plants such as lettuce and spinach into mRNA vaccine factories, thereby creating a transgenic edible vaccine. One associate professor at UCR explained that ideally, a single plant would produce enough mRNA to vaccinate a single person. We're testing this approach with spinach and lettuce, and have long-

term goals of people growing it in their own gardens. Farmers could also eventually grow entire fields of it. I don't think this is a good idea; I don't think the American people should be funding this. What could possibly go wrong with this research? We found out a few years ago when a biotech company was experimenting, growing in corn, a vaccine to keep pigs from getting diarrhea. What happened? The next year when the corn was grown, the corn came up, and it co-mingled with soybeans that were being grown there. It contaminated 500 bushels of soybeans, which were then co-mingled with 50,000 bushels of soybeans, and those all had to be recalled and destroyed. Luckily, they caught it. Do we want humans eating vaccines that were grown in corn meant to stop pigs from getting diarrhea? We don't want that to happen, yet that almost happened, and it could happen.

There's another case where the pollen cross-contaminated another crop of corn, and 155 acres of corn had to be burned. What are the instances where we need to discover this? I think it's dangerous to play God with our food. We need a safe food supply. That's why funding transgenic edible plant vaccine research from the USDA is a bad idea.

“ I urge the adoption of my amendment and yield back the balance of my time.”

Representative Pete Stauber: “The questions on the amendment are from a gentleman from Kentucky. Those in favor say aye. Those opposed say no. In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it. The amendment is agreed to.”

Kennedy: Did that get in the omnibus bill? Is that law now, or is it still out there and not part of anything?

Massie: Thanks for reminding me of that. It should be law; it should have been in the omnibus bill because not a single person voted against it when I brought it to the floor as part of the appropriations process. My amendment to the AG Appropriations, which would have constrained the USDA, said that, and I offered this amendment in other appropriations bills, none of the money hereby appropriated shall be used to fund transgenic edible plant vaccines. I know that's a word salad, but that's what they call these when they grow vaccines in the food supply; transgenic edible plant vaccines. The government is funding research for this.

For better or worse, my bill doesn't even stop private entities from doing it. It

just says we will use something other than taxpayer money for this. Given the liability involved, I need clarification on whether any private entity would want to do this. It takes somebody like the government to experiment with a virus that can then end up killing millions of people because there's no liability to the government. They're the ones who are going to 'fiddle around' and play God because they aren't going to be liable. Even though my amendment didn't outlaw it, it forbids the government from funding it; I don't think the private entity will play around with it.

They have in the past, and there were some big lawsuits involved; they tried to make a vaccine and grow it in corn that kept hogs from getting diarrhea. This was many years ago by a private entity. Guess what? Two things happened: The pollen spread to neighboring fields, and people grew corn with pig diarrhea vaccines. Then another thing happened: They grew soybeans in a field where some of the corn came up, and now you have soybeans that are blended with corn and have a vaccine for pig diarrhea. I know it sounds horrible, but they had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages because they had to destroy a lot of ruined soybeans and corn. The question is, "How much of it didn't get caught? How much of that crazy stuff did people eat in corn meal and whatnot?" Who knows?

Private companies are liable, and that's why they should be defunded. To answer your question, it wasn't included in the omnibus bill. I should offer that amendment again this summer as we at least pretend to go through the funding process. I don't know; it's frustrating. I'm losing my sense of amused detachment.

Kennedy: Time to go on to the money.

Fitts: We'll turn to *Financial Freedom*. One of the websites we love at the *Solari Report* is the debt clock, but you've done one better. Why don't you tell everybody what you are wearing; the pin you're wearing on your suit, and how we can get all of our members of Congress wearing it?

Massie: I've invented this. I don't know if it's in focus well enough to see, but you can't see that the last five digits are changing too fast to read. I call it my anxiety generator. It's meant to generate anxiety among my colleagues because that's the one thing they lack; they're all concerned about the debt. They're just not very worried about the debt. I'm trying to elevate their concerns. I built this

debt clock to wear because they can't stop me from wearing it. They can stop me from nailing one to the wall in the House of Representatives, the Budget Committee in the Ways and Means Committee, or the Appropriations Committee, but they can't stop me from wearing it. I built a wearable debt clock. It has Wi-Fi, goes to Treasury, gets debt to the penny once a day, looks at the debt one year ago, comes up with a one-year rolling average of debt per second, and displays instantaneously the best, most accurate debt you could have. I have been slowly giving these out to other members of Congress. I call them badges of shame. They're not debt badges, but they're badges of shame. I am just trying to increase awareness of the debt. It's working a little. I have people in the elevators who can't look away from my debt. I told a female congressman that my eyes were up here. She seemed to be staring down here at me all the time. She said, "I should make belt buckles with them."

Fitts: I think it's very effective. There are a couple of issues. We will talk about financial freedom, but there are a couple of other issues. I want to talk to you about the layers we focus on. Of course, one is we think a debt-based currency is a terrible idea, and we love your debt clock because it's one of the things it shows. The Treasury could have issued \$35 trillion of currency without debt. We're in a debt trap and don't need to get there.

Massie: Correct. Five trillion dollars of it in the last few years is actually printed; we borrowed it from ourselves. They were very polite and reported it as debt as if they would repay it to themselves someday. I don't think we're going to pay ourselves back. You'd have to bring the dollars back in, and it's almost the equivalent of burning them in a pile. If the government ever collects extra dollars, I guarantee they will spend them. They're going to keep the money supply high. Occasionally, they reduce the balance sheet slightly at the Fed, but then it goes back up more than they reduced it. We need sound money management. They can only get away with these things they're doing at the three-letter agencies if they have infinite money to implement it. We would have fewer mandates like electronic IDs for cattle if they had less money to do it with or if people had to pay taxes. Can you imagine if they sent you a bill on your 1040 that said, "We just implemented an animal ID that's going to cost this much, so here, pay this much extra."

Fitts: When I worked in Washington, I was part of a group of people who passed laws requiring audited financial statements for the agencies. They had to

disclose and obey the constitutional provisions related to disclosure and report how the money was spent, et cetera. We have a series of agencies that have never been able to do it, so the Treasury never complied with those laws. It's the reason we know that as of 2015, there are 21 trillion dollars missing from DOD and HUD, and there's never been an effort to run those transactions down. Of course, the New York Fed is a private bank owned by its members and is the US government's depository. I've always been a big proponent of auditing the Fed, and it's really been your Kentucky colleagues who've promoted it.

Massie: It needs to undergo an audit. They try to make two arguments against my bill to audit the Fed. The first one they say is we're already audited, and so we report enough information already. The reality is, "Why do you oppose my bill if it's redundant?" The reality is there are many things they do that still need to be audited that are beyond the view of the American people and also just beyond the view of Congress. How do they make these decisions? Then, when they do transactions with foreign banks to try to prop up other countries, those transactions happen in the blink of an eye with no explanation given to us.

Fitts: If you look at the Fed's audited statements, there are huge amounts of operations, including the depository operation, that is not included in that. That's clearly part of what needs to get audited.

Massie: Their first argument is we're already audited. My rebuttal to that is, "Then you'll love my bill because it's completely redundant and you'll have no extra work." The second argument they make is if you audit us, it will change the way we do things. You just made my argument for auditing you.

Fitts: Exactly. One of my concerns in the mid '90s was that the New York Fed and the Fed finally bought shares in the Bank of International Settlements. One of my concerns, if you look at what they're trying to do with CBDCs and centralization, is there's always a danger that more and more power goes centrally upstairs to the BIS. There's plenty of push and talk now about ending the Fed but of course, the question is, "What replaces it?" If Treasury replaces it, it's very different than if the BIS replaces it.

Massie: When you take out a tumor, what do you replace it with? Sorry, I'm being facetious.

Fitts: But here's the thing: The Fed and the people at the Fed have

constitutional obligations to the country and the people. The BIS has sovereign immunity and no legal obligations to anybody in America.

Massie: Right. That was my flippant answer to, “What do you replace a tumor with?” The real answer is if you had sound money that the government cannot manipulate and they took us off the gold standard 50 years ago because it was running afoul of their desire to manipulate it. I think if we had absolutely sound money, like a gold standard or a Bitcoin standard, we would be immune to the international bank.

Fitts: I love precious metals and I think precious metals is a wonderful thing; gold's a wonderful thing. Right now if you look at the state of play, the people and the state governments own almost very little or no precious metals and the central bankers control it all. If we go to a gold standard, we put ourselves in a short squeeze where they have control.

Massie: Not all precious metals are suitable for money.

Fitts: Right.

Massie: In fact, silver has had ups and downs when people try to use it. The problem is, when the demand for silver goes up, you can do things and create more silver more quickly compared to the existing stocks of silver than the case for gold. Silver also gets consumed in industrial processes. I wouldn't put gold in the same category as all precious metals, but it can work. There's an argument that, "Oh, there's not enough of it to go around," but if it becomes the unit of transaction, we just adjust prices to deal with that instead of accepting the fact that we're going to create more fiat currency all the time and deal with it.

Fitts: If you propose to end the Fed, who would govern the issuance? Would it be states or the Treasury or a combination of both or private banks? How would you do it?

Massie: Congress has the power to coin money and set the value thereof. There's the argument that, "Oh my gosh, Congress will just print all the money it wants." That's a legitimate argument that could happen. I hope it doesn't happen, but at least the people who do it are elected.

Fitts: Accountable.

Massie: Yes, accountable. You can throw them out. If they cause inflation, you know who to blame. You should blame us anyway because we've massively overspent, and the Federal Reserve is the tool that allows us to do that. That's why you shouldn't let Congress create only fiat money. You should have some sound money exchangeable for something of value that doesn't change quickly over time so that you know if you're holding money. It'll also encourage savings. Part of the inflation and the monetarists will admit this. They're trying to get you out of holding dollars and into the stock market. They can raise the stock market's value by devaluing the dollar because if it's not safe to hold dollars, you have to find somewhere to put them.

Fitts: I'm very intrigued by the fact that your committee oversees the administrative state. Are you familiar with FASAB 56, the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board Statement 56? In 2008, when they couldn't produce an audit, and there was a lot of pressure to produce an audit, Dr. Mark Skidmore published a survey saying, "There's \$21 trillion in undocumented adjustments." There's a lot of pressure on DOD to produce an audit. Instead, the federal government and Congress together, and the executive branch adopted a short-term policy called FASAB 56 that says the US government can keep secret books. By an administrative policy, they are saying that you can override the constitutional provisions of financial management and the financial management laws. It's one of the most amazing extensions of the administrative state I've ever seen in Washington.

Massie: I need to learn more about it. I know.

Fitts: I'm going to send you information about FASAB 56. We wanted to do a section called Cloning Thomas Massie and how we can inspire more state and local government people to follow your lead. One of my questions was how can we learn from you how to maintain our state of amusement and keep pushing for food and financial freedom? One of the things we're going to do is post a link to the Tucker Carlson interview because your description of your home and how you built it is fantastic. Do you have any thoughts on how we can support you and learn more about your work? We would love to see our subscriber and network leverage your work and support you so that you have far more reach.

Massie: First of all, please don't clone me. I'm afraid that one day I'll walk on the floor of the House and I'll see my doppelganger and that he'll have the same genetics as me but a different ideology. It'll be tough to battle that person.

Fitts: Right.

Massie: It's easier to go up against people that may need to be more firmly planted. Outside of a clone, what people fail to do is throw out the 'duds'. When you get a dud, it's tough. When I was in business, it took plenty of work to hire people and avoid making mistakes. One of the sayings I came up with is, "Anybody can fake not being crazy for a month." You end up hiring some crazy people and six months into it, you're like, "Whoa, this person's clinical." Successful companies have a way of dealing with people when they hire them and it's not working out, they wouldn't keep them around. Yet, people, when they elect a congressman and they choose poorly, and there's evidence that they've chosen poorly, they don't get rid of that congressman. This is the biggest problem. Term limits will not fix it. I'll vote for term limits, but term limits is not going to fix the problem. I say when you throw out all the 'old clowns', who picks the new clowns? The same people that pick the old clowns. One of the only things that keeps the old clowns or makes them do the right thing is they want to stay there. Part of it is going to be replacing bad ones. When you get a dud, throw the dud out. If your milk goes sour, don't keep it in the fridge. Then the other part is sometimes it's hard to replace people. What can you do to get the wrong person to do the right thing? What pressure can you bring to bear? Because many of my colleagues just look for the easiest path; the path of least resistance, the path to get reelected. You just have to be a squeakier wheel than the lobbyists are here. Engage; make phone calls. If you can't remember what HR number it is, just tell them, "Vote with Massie. I want you to co-sponsor Massie's bill, the PRIME Act, even if you can't remember the name." Just say, "It has something to do with cattle and Thomas Massie is the co-sponsor and it's necessary to the health of my family and the well-being of this country that you co-sponsor that bill."

Fitts: You'd like more sponsors on the sub-PRIME Act?

Massie: Yes. Be clear, every bill that I've gotten as a standalone bill, I need more co-sponsors for it, even though I may have a different legislative strategy for getting it passed. When I went to the chairman of the Ag Committee and said, "Hey, I've got this idea for a PRIME Act and I'd like to do a pilot program of it in your bill," I had to demonstrate to him that it would improve his bill and that it wouldn't be a 'poison pill', and that they would likely get more support for the farm bill if they included it instead of less support. The only way I could

really demonstrate that concretely was to show them I had over 50 co-sponsors from all ideological factions of this Congress. That gave them some comfort that if they introduced a scaled-down version of that, that they would have at least 50 supporters for that scaled-down version, and that it would get them more votes instead of fewer votes. That's the strategy. We get co-sponsors for the standalone bill, and then we look for opportunities to offer it as an amendment to pieces of legislation we know are going to pass, like the farm bill or the spending bills.

Fitts: We'll add a list to the commentary. Congressman, I cannot thank you enough for everything you do. It was great to finally meet you at Polyface with Joel Salatin and Pete Kennedy. It was a wonderful time. We don't know why we have three of our favorite politicians are from Appalachia.

Massie: It's a good place to grow up. You have to be hardy; we're some of the greenest people on the planet. When I look at old house sites on my farm, there's nothing left. It just melted into the ground because those people that came before me used what was around them locally and it dissolved in the ground. There's a well there and some lilies still growing, and that's the only evidence there was a house there. I want to give you a shout-out.

At Polyface, you said something, and us politicians are big into stealing ideas and jokes and things, but I immediately tweeted something you said, "If you let them monitor your financial transactions, you will be eating the bugs or fake meat."

Massie: That is so true and that's why the monetary stuff and the food freedom goes together. You cannot have freedom if you don't have a means for having transactions among individuals.

Fitts: Absolutely. Food and financial freedom go hand in hand. Pete, thank you again, and Congressman Massie, thank you. You have a wonderful day. Just keep us posted. Anytime we can put out a broadcast or support your efforts or help, we will do so.

Massie: Thank you, Catherine Austin.

MODIFICATION

Transcripts are not always verbatim. Modifications are sometimes made to improve clarity, usefulness and readability, while staying true to the original intent.

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