

March 13, 2019

Senate Budget Committee Chair Mike Enzi
Senate Budget Committee Ranking Member Bernard Sanders
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

House Budget Committee Chair John Yarmuth
House Budget Committee Ranking Member Steve Womack
U.S. House of Representatives
204-E Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Richard Shelby
Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

House Appropriations Committee Chair Nita Lowey
House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Kay Granger
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

The undersigned organizations strongly urge you to reject calls for additional cuts to policies within the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry or the House Committee on Agriculture.

In December, Congress passed a bipartisan farm bill that was budget neutral, building on the 2014 Farm Bill that made a significant contribution to deficit reduction. The 2014 Farm Bill was estimated to contribute \$23 billion to deficit reduction over ten years at the time of passage. In fact, it was the only reauthorization bill in Congress that voluntarily offered savings.

These difficult cuts in 2014 resulted from hard choices made in partnership with agricultural leaders and were designed to substantially reform the farm safety net, conservation initiatives and nutrition assistance – ultimately reducing the financial support provided to America's farmers and ranchers.

Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office estimates the 2014 Farm Bill has cost far less than projected. According to CBO, nutrition and crop insurance alone will spend nearly \$100 billion less than originally projected due to lower farm-gate prices and continued strength in the overall U.S. economy.

The 2018 Farm Bill improves upon reforms made in 2014 and is budget neutral, with the measure projected to spend far less over ten years compared to the 2014 Farm Bill. The bill does so while also improving access to conservation programs, maintaining a commitment to nutrition programs, investing in research and providing farmers and ranchers with the risk management certainty needed in this uncertain environment.

There is no doubt that farm country and the economies of agricultural-based rural America are hurting. While USDA forecasts farm income will rise nearly ten percent in 2019, that level is still down 44 percent from 2013. In addition, farm debt and debt-to-asset ratios are climbing, bankruptcies are on the rise and retaliatory tariffs weigh on farm prices and erode our competitiveness in key export markets.

With the agriculture and rural economy struggling and as USDA begins implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, we respectfully request you reject cuts to vital farm policy programs. Further cuts to farm programs would deliver a significant blow to U.S. agriculture at a time when farmers, ranchers, and rural America are already struggling.

Sincerely,

Ag New Mexico, FCS, ACA

AgCarolina Farm Credit

AgChoice Farm Credit

AgCredit, ACA

AgFirst FCB

AgGeorgia Farm Credit

AgriBank FCB

Agriculture Council of Arkansas

Agriculture Energy Coalition

AgSouth Farm Credit

Alabama Ag Credit

Alabama Cotton Commission

Alabama Farmers Federation

Alaska Farm Bureau

Amcot

American Agri-Women
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Farmland Trust
American Pulse Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Sugar Alliance
American Sugar Cane League
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
Aquatic Plant Management Society
ArborOne Farm Credit
Arizona Cotton Ginners Association
Arizona Cotton Growers Association
Arizona Farm Bureau Federation
Arkansas Farm Bureau
Arkansas Rice Federation
Arkansas Rice Growers Association
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Blackland Cotton and Grain Producers, Inc.
Calcot, Ltd
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Rice Commission
Cape Fear Farm Credit
Capital Farm Credit

Carolina Farm Credit
Carolinas Cotton Growers Cooperative
Catfish Farmers of Arkansas
Central Kentucky Ag Credit
CoBank
Colonial Farm Credit
Colorado Association of Wheat Growers
Colorado Corn Growers Association
Colorado Farm Bureau
Compeer Financial
Connecticut Farm Bureau
Cotton Producers of Missouri
Cotton Producers of the Lower Rio Grande Valley
Cotton Warehouse Association of America
Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau
Crop Insurance Professionals Association
Crop Science Society of America
Delta Council
Ducks Unlimited
Farm Credit Bank of Texas
Farm Credit Council
Farm Credit East
Farm Credit of Central Florida
Farm Credit of New Mexico
Farm Credit of the Virginias
Farm Credit Services of America
Farm Journal Foundation
Florida Farm Bureau Federation

Frontier Farm Credit
Georgia Cotton Commission
Georgia Farm Bureau
GreenStone Farm Credit Services
Idaho Farm Bureau
Idaho Grain Producers Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Indiana Farm Bureau
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers
Kansas Cotton Association
Kansas Cotton Association Ginner Committee
Kansas Farm Bureau
Kentucky Farm Bureau
Lone Star Ag Credit
Louisiana Cotton and Grain Association
Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
Louisiana Independent Rice Producers Association
Louisiana Rice Producer Group
Maryland Farm Bureau
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation
Michigan Farm Bureau
MidAtlantic Farm Credit
Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers
Minnesota Farm Bureau
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
Mississippi Land Bank, ACA
Mississippi Rice Council

Missouri Farm Bureau
Missouri Rice Research and Merchandising Council
Montana Farm Bureau Federation
Montana Grain Growers Association
National Aquaculture Association
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Cotton Ginners Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Onion Association
National Peach Council
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
Nebraska Farm Bureau
Nebraska Wheat Board
Nebraska Wheat Growers Association
New Mexico Cotton Ginners Association
New York Farm Bureau
North Carolina Cotton Producers Association

North Carolina Farm Bureau
North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association
North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northwest Dairy Association
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Oklahoma Cotton Council
Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Oklahoma Wheat Growers Association
Oregon Farm Bureau
Oregon Wheat Growers League
Panhandle Peanut Growers Association
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
Pheasants Forever
Plains Cotton Cooperative Association
Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Plains Land Bank
Pollinator Partnership
Premier Farm Credit
Quail Forever
Riceland Foods
Rolling Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Soil Science Society of America
South Carolina Farm Bureau
South Carolina Peach Council
South Dakota Farm Bureau
South Dakota Wheat, Inc.
South Texas Cotton and Grain Association

Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association
Southern Cotton Ginners Association
Southern Cotton Growers, Inc.
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation
Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
Southwest Georgia Farm Credit
St. Lawrence Cotton Growers Association
Staplcotn
Tennessee Farm Bureau
Texas Cotton Ginners Association
Texas Farm Bureau
Texas Farm Credit
Texas Rice Council
Texas Rice Producers Legislative Group
Texas Wheat Producers Association
The Fertilizer Institute
The Nature Conservancy
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Dry Bean Council
U.S. Durum Growers Association
U.S. Rice Producers Association
U.S. Sweet Potato Council
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice
Vermont Farm Bureau

Virginia Cotton Growers Association

Virginia Farm Bureau

Washington Association of Wheat Growers

Washington Farm Bureau

Washington State Potato Commission

Weed Science Society of America

Western Growers

Western Peanut Growers Association

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Yankee Farm Credit