

November 28, 2005

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
And Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
And Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members:

The undersigned organizations very much appreciate efforts by both of your Committees to meet Budget Reconciliation instructions for mandatory spending reductions in FY-2006/10 in an equitable manner that minimizes adverse impacts on agriculture programs. We are writing to provide recommendations on how differences between the Senate and House proposals can be resolved to ensure achievement of this objective in the final Conference report.

Total Reductions – Total spending reductions should not exceed \$3.0 billion over the FY-2006/10 period, as provided in the FY2006 Budget Resolution. U.S. agriculture is already paying more than its share of damages from hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the form of higher energy and fertilizer prices and lower farm prices resulting from disruption in our river transportation system. We do not support paying for extension of the MILC program through cuts in other programs in the agriculture budget.

Commodity Programs – Reductions in commodity program spending should not exceed \$1.033 billion, as provided in the House proposal.

Conservation Programs – Reductions in conservations program spending should not exceed \$734 million, as provided in the House proposal, and should include restriction of total CRP acres, as provided in the Senate proposal.

Balance of Reductions – The balance of required spending reductions of approximately \$1.25 billion should be divided between food stamp reforms and other programs authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill.

Extension of Program Authorities – Baseline funding for farm programs should be preserved.

We again thank you for your efforts to minimize the impacts of spending reductions on programs in the agriculture budget, and look forward to working closely with you on this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Soybean Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sunflower Association  
US Canola Association

cc: Members of the Conference Committee