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 respectively 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.

Ag New Mexico, FCS, ACA

AgCarolina Farm Credit

AgChoice Farm Credit

AgCredit, ACA

AgFirst FCB

Sincerely,

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