



January 29, 2014

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson:

The Campaign for Renewed Rural Development (CRRD), a coalition of over thirty of our nation's rural policy advocacy organizations, applauds your hard work and leadership in moving a comprehensive Farm Bill through Congress. We now urge the full U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to pass the bi-partisan farm bill conference report.

While our members represent a broad spectrum of rural interests, the CRRD unites around the need for a robust Rural Development title that promotes economic growth and stability in rural areas by creating jobs and ensuring the success of our next generations.

We are pleased that the conference report addresses many CRRD priorities within the Rural Development title and applaud the \$228 million mandatory funding level for the Rural Development title including \$63 million in mandatory funding for the Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG); \$15 million in mandatory funding for the Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program, and \$150 million in mandatory funding for the Water and Waste Water Program.

Rural America is the backbone to our country and requires efficient and effective public policies in order to thrive. Again, we applaud your hard work and leadership throughout this process and look forward to Congress passing a new farm bill.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association

Fair Food Network

Farmer Mac

League of Rural Voters

National Association of Counties

National Association of Development Organizations

National Association of Regional Councils

National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils

National Association of Towns and Townships

National Catholic Rural Life Conference

National Farmers Union

National Grange

National League of Cities

National Rural Health Association

National Telecommunications Cooperative Association – The Rural Broadband Association

Northeast States Association for Agriculture Stewardship

State Agriculture and Rural Leaders

Tennessee Association of Utility Districts

The Rural Coalition