

June 2, 2009

Representative Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and  
Related Agencies Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jack Kingston  
Ranking Member  
Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and  
Related Agencies Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Kingston:

We the undersigned farm, forestry, conservation and environmental organizations urge you to maintain the mandatory spending levels for conservation programs as provided in the 2008 Farm Bill and to reject the Obama Administration's proposed cuts to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, Farmland Protection Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Agricultural Management Assistance Program, and Healthy Forest Reserve Program. We also encourage you to increase funding for conservation technical assistance and to prohibit the Administration from administratively ending the CRP Public Access program.

The decisions on the farm bill funding were not without a great amount of debate. Congress approved the Food, Conservation and Energy Act twice over the vetoes of President Bush. We are disappointed that President Obama's budget continues the unfortunate pattern of proposing cuts to conservation programs below mandatory levels established in the farm bill, in this case asking for over \$500 million in cuts for FY 10 plus additional long-term permanent cuts. Demand for participation in conservation programs routinely far outstrips available funding, and this proposal will only exacerbate that problem as well as undermine conservation practice adoption on-the-ground.

We urge you to maintain the mandatory conservation funding levels as agreed to last year in the 2008 Farm Bill and reject the proposed one-year and permanent cuts.

Sincerely,

American Beekeeping Federation  
American Farmland Trust  
American Forest Foundation  
American Honey Producers Association  
American Soybean Association  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
American Mushroom Institute

Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Ducks Unlimited  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Working Group  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Land Trust Alliance  
Louisiana Wildlife Federation  
Mississippi River Trust  
National Association of Conservation Districts  
National Association of State Foresters  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Audubon Society  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Conservation District Employees Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Turkey Federation  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
National Wildlife Federation  
National Woodland Owners Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Partners for Sustainable Pollination  
Pheasants Forever  
Pollinator Partnership  
Public Lands Council  
Quail Forever  
Society of American Foresters  
The Nature Conservancy  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Trout Unlimited  
USA Rice Federation  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
United Egg Producers  
Western Growers  
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Wildlife Mississippi  
World Wildlife Fund