

September 28, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture
Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
Ranking Member, Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

Dear Senators Reid, McConnell, Harkin, and Chambliss:

The undersigned organizations write to support expedited action on the 2007 Farm Bill. It is critical that the Senate develop omnibus farm legislation as soon as possible in order to assure enactment of a new farm bill this year.

While our organizations have differences on specific policy recommendations, we believe it is vitally important that the Senate Agriculture Committee mark up and pass a 2007 Farm Bill as soon as possible. Only a few days remain before provisions of the 2002 law expire. Farmers and ranchers need certainty on the policy environment in which they will operate next year. Several conservation and nutrition programs expire at the end of the fiscal year. These programs that conserve land resources and serve poor and hungry people must be reauthorized and adequately funded now.

Extending the 2002 Farm Bill is not an acceptable alternative to enacting new legislation that addresses important needs in each of these areas. Extension is only a short term solution that does not provide the assurances that the nutrition, agriculture and conservation communities need for efficient long-term planning.

We are working with the Senate Agriculture Committee to develop a farm bill that addresses our priorities, but are concerned that delayed action on this legislation is lessening the chances of completing a new farm bill this year. We therefore urge a quick and favorable resolution to the funding and other outstanding issues that are holding up action on this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to move this process forward in the Senate in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

AARP
Alliance to End Hunger
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Malting Barley Association, Inc.
American Soybean Association
America's Second Harvest
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP)
Coalition of Human Needs

Community Food Security Coalition
Congressional Hunger Center
End Hunger Network
First Focus
Food Research and Action Center
Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Migrant Legal Action Program
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Corn Growers Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Commodity Supplemental Food Program Association
National Education Association (NEA)
National Farmers Union
National Grange
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
National Milk Producers Federation
National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness (NPACH)
National Pork Producers Council
National Recreation and Park Association
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
National WIC Association
National Wild Turkey Foundation
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
OMB Watch
Pheasants Forever
Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office
Quail Unlimited
RESULTS
School Nutrition Association
Share Our Strength
Society of St. Andrew
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation
Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance
The Brewers Association
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Dry Bean Council
U.S. Rice Producers Association
USAction
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council
USA Rice Federation
Voices for America's Children
Wider Opportunities for Women
YWCA USA