



May 12, 2008

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the USA Rice Federation and its producer, miller, and merchant members and allied businesses, we urge your vote in support of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (H.R. 2419 – Farm Bill) that is scheduled for a vote this week in both the House and Senate. Even though the bill may not be perfect in some respects, we believe it represents the best opportunity to provide long-term, predictable farm policy for the rice industry and all American agriculture. While maintaining an effective safety net structure for farmers, the bill includes significant reforms to payment limit provisions and program eligibility requirements. It also provides over \$10 billion in additional resources for the nutrition programs that are critical in providing food for low-income Americans. This bill also makes a strong investment in conservation and environmental stewardship efforts by providing an additional \$6.5 billion for programs to protect soil, water, and air quality.

Specifically, the Farm Bill includes two provisions requested by the rice industry to help improve the operation of the rice safety net programs. This includes a provision to ensure a uniform marketing loan rate of \$6.50/cwt for all classes of rice. There is also a provision that requires USDA to calculate a separate counter cyclical payment rate for both long grain rice and for medium/short grain rice. The Farm Bill meets “pay-go” budget requirements with all “above baseline” funding paid for by budget offsets and there are no tax increases in the bill. The bill includes the most substantial reforms to the farm programs in history. As such, those that continue to argue the bill does not represent real reform are failing to recognize the significance of these changes and this further proves that some will never be content until the farm safety net is completely dismantled – a clear mistake given the importance of maintaining adequate domestic food and fiber production. This need is further highlighted now given the recent increase in food demand and prices around the world.

This Farm Bill will serve American agriculture and every U.S. consumer and many around the world well and it deserves strong support from Congress. We again urge your vote and support for this bill. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Reece Langley (703-839-5297 or [rlangley@usarice.com](mailto:rlangley@usarice.com)) or Johnny Broussard (703-732-2336 or [jbroussard@usarice.com](mailto:jbroussard@usarice.com)) at the USA Rice Federation.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of the U.S. rice industry.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Thomas C. Hoskyn in black ink.

Thomas C. Hoskyn, Chairman  
USA Rice Producers' Group

Handwritten signature of Alfred G. Montna in black ink.

Alfred G. Montna, Chairman  
USA Rice Federation

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