

July 24, 2007

Dear Members of Congress—

As the House of Representatives considers the 2007 farm bill later this week, we the undersigned—representing millions of American farmers, ranchers, agricultural businesses and lenders from across the United States—ask that you reject outright any amendments that would weaken the farm safety net provided under House Agriculture Committee Chairman Peterson’s mark. In particular, we ask you reject any amendments proposed by Representatives Kind and Flake or other amendments that represent their approach to farm policy or their proposal.

The Kind-Flake farm bill proposal—mistakenly being marketed as “reform” when it is nothing more than “repeal”—would dismantle the farm safety net and put U.S. farmers and ranchers in an unfair competition against heavily subsidized foreign producers. Virtually all of our farmers and ranchers—including those raising fruit, peanuts, vegetables, dairy, soybeans, sugar, corn, cotton, wheat, rice, other grains, livestock, and many others—would be financially harmed by even the most modest price drops if these proposals became law.

Kind-Flake would also hurt crop insurance at a time when Congress is trying to bolster crop loss protection. Moreover, Kind-Flake undermines farmers’ ability to promote and use conservation methods that protect our water, air, soil, and wildlife.

Sadly, the Kind-Flake scheme ignores the unparalleled success of the 2002 farm bill, which has saved American taxpayers \$25 billion and ensures that all Americans continue to enjoy the world’s safest and most affordable food supply. This proposal also fails to recognize that U.S. agriculture is an economic driver, employing 20% of the nation’s workforce and contributing \$3.5 trillion to the nation’s economy annually—supportive policies should not be weakened.

The Kind-Flake proposal—in any form—does not represent American farmers or the American citizens we serve every day, and we respectfully urge all Members of Congress to reject it.

Agricultural Retailers Association
Alabama Peanut Producers Association
American Agri-Women
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Beekeeping Federation
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Sheep Industry Association
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
American Sugar Cane League
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
California Rice Commission
Cattle Producers of Washington
Colorado Corn Growers Association
Colorado Independent Cattle Growers Association
Cora Texas Manufacturing Company
Corn Growers Association of North Carolina
Corn Producers Association of Texas
Cotton Warehouse Association of America
Crop Insurance Professionals Association
Crop Insurance Research Bureau
Dairy Farmers of America
Farm Credit Council
Farm Policy Facts
Florida Peanut Producers Association
Florida Sugar Cane League
Gay and Robinson, Inc.
Georgia Peanut Commission
Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Co.
Independent Beef Association of North Dakota
Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska
Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America
Indiana Corn Growers Association
Kansas Cattlemen's Association
Lula-Westfield, L.L.C.
Maryland Grain Producers Association
Michigan Corn Growers Association

Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Minnesota Farmers Union
Minnesota Soybean Growers Association
Mississippi Livestock Markets Association
Mississippi Peanut Growers Association
Missouri Corn Growers Association
Montana Cattlemen's Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council of America
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
Nebraska Corn Growers Association
North Carolina Peanut Growers Association
Ohio Corn Growers Association
Plains Cotton Growers
Rain & Hail, LLC
Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc.
Rural Community Insurance Services
South Dakota Corn Growers Association
South Dakota Corn Utilization Council
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Dry Bean Council
United Egg Producers Certified
United States Cattlemen's Association
US Rice Producers Association
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice Federation
Western Peanut Growers Association
Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE)