

May 22, 2024

The Honorable GT Thompson  
Chair  
Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The undersigned organizations represent a broad cross-section of American agriculture and have equally diverse interests, yet we come together to write to express our appreciation for your efforts to begin work on the 2024 Farm Bill.

The Farm, Food, and National Security Act improves the farm safety net through adjustments in reference prices, marketing assistance loan rates, crop insurance and other programs. As costs for land, labor, inputs and equipment continue to pressure farm and ranch balance sheets, these improvements are sorely needed. We also appreciate the enhancements to existing disaster programs to reduce the need for future ad hoc disaster assistance.

We are encouraged by the provisions to capture one-time conservation funds and ensure that they provide long-term enhancement to the conservation baseline, while also providing increases to current, oversubscribed conservation programs. We appreciate your recognition that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to conservation; the farm bill's conservation programs must be flexible enough to accommodate this country's wide range of conservation needs, crops, soil types, farming practices, and weather systems. The provision to create a forest easement program will allow producers and landowners with forested lands not associated with water resources to invest in long-term conservation of those forests that are vital for wildlife species.

We appreciate the investments made in research and innovation to improve production efficiencies and enhance our global competitiveness. In addition, expanded resources to combat new and invasive pests and pathogens are vital to protecting farmer productivity and maintaining foreign market access.

Many organizations have sought for years to increase funding for the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program. We applaud the additional resources you propose for these critical programs to maintain and enhance export market opportunities for numerous agricultural products and the farmers, ranchers and foresters that produce them. Similarly, we appreciate the inclusion of long overdue life-saving reforms to international food aid programs.

We recognize that nutrition programs play a key role in the lives of many American families and their inclusion in the farm bill is a key component to the success of the coalition that comes together to support each farm bill. The bill also updates current credit programs to meet borrowers' needs while enhancing opportunities for those just entering farming and ranching. Meanwhile, the bill ensures that programs which serve rural communities remain relevant and robust to meet growing and dynamic requirements.

Farmers and ranchers rely on continued investment in research to remain competitive in a global marketplace. We applaud the investment that this bill makes in research facilities and programs across the country. Horticultural and specialty crop producers are reliant on the programs specially aimed at meeting their unique needs and the bill's enhanced investment in these programs is critical.

There are numerous other provisions of this bill that are responsive to the needs and requests that have been presented to you and your staff over the past 17 months. We are encouraged by the Committee's actions and look forward to working with you and all members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to meet the needs of farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

Agricultural Retailers Association  
Amcot  
American Cotton Shippers Association  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Sheep Industry Association  
American Soybean Association  
Beef Alliance  
California Association of Winegrape Growers  
California Walnut Commission  
Cotton Growers Warehouse Association  
Cotton Warehouse Association of America  
Crop Insurance Professionals Association  
Delta Council  
Florida Citrus Mutual  
North American Millers' Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sunflower Association  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
Society of American Florists  
Southern Crop Production Association  
Southwest Council of Agribusiness  
Texas Cattle Feeders Association  
Texas Citrus Mutual  
United Egg Producers  
US Canola Association  
US Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
USA Rice  
Western Peanut Growers Association