

November 4, 2009

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Begich
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators,

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your ongoing work related to agricultural offsets and incentives within the context of climate change legislation. We are grateful for your extensive work on this issue and your recognition that agriculture can play an important role in helping to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions through a market based cap-and-trade system.

Earlier this year, many of our groups identified key principles which have served as a guiding document throughout this process. An important goal for our industry has been to craft legislation which makes economic sense for the agricultural community, including participation for early actors, an appropriate definition of permanence and contract duration, and a primary role for USDA as the oversight agency. It is imperative that legislation be structured in such a way that the value for farmers and ranchers exceeds potential costs.

The bill you introduced today is a positive step toward developing a workable and beneficial agricultural offsets program in the U.S. As we continue to evaluate the implications of comprehensive climate legislation on our industry, we look forward to working with you, as well as Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Blanche Lincoln and other members of the committee as this issue moves forward.

Again, we commend you for your efforts and longstanding outreach to the agricultural community, and we look forward to providing further input in the future.

Regards,

National Association of Wheat Growers
National Corn Growers Association
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Alfalfa & Forage Association
American Farmland Trust