

June 30, 2010

The Honorable Tim Holden  
Chairman, House Agriculture  
Subcommittee on Conservation  
1336 House Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20015

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Ranking Member, House Agriculture  
Subcommittee on Conservation  
1336 House Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Chairman Holden and Ranking Member Goodlatte:

The undersigned organizations represent a broad cross-section of the farmers and ranchers that make up U.S. agriculture. We appreciate the outstanding work the House Committee on Agriculture and its Conservation Subcommittee do to create effective, forward-looking policies that truly help agriculture conserve and protect resources and the environment while maintaining the economic health of farms, ranches, and the rural communities where they operate. This approach is evident in your recent bipartisan legislative effort, the *Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization and Improvement Act*, H.R. 5509.

Farmers and ranchers in the Chesapeake Bay region have a proven track record of caring for our natural resources and will continue to do more to conserve and protect these resources. This bill is a common-sense approach that will support and encourage these efforts. H.R. 5509 provides sound incentives that support the implementation of additional environmental best management practices beyond minimum state regulatory compliance requirements. Your bill also gives assurances to farmers and ranchers that by taking such steps they will meet expectations for agriculture's contribution to efforts to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed over a reasonable period of time. Perhaps most importantly, the bill will help agriculture, business, states and local governments within the Chesapeake Bay watershed work together not only to improve water quality but to do so while generating jobs, vibrant businesses, and thriving communities.

Your efforts will help to avoid counter-productive regulatory restrictions that would not only limit opportunities for agricultural operations but would also threaten to put many of them and other companies out of business.

Sincerely,

The Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Farm Bureau Federation®  
National Agricultural Aviation Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Farmers Union  
National Milk Producers Federation  
United Egg Producers

CC: House Agriculture Committee  
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

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