

June 26, 2009

House Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Committee Members:

The undersigned agricultural and agri-business associations reiterate our continued concerns regarding the impact of H.R. 2749 on America's farms, ranches and agribusinesses. Among the most significant are the on-farm issues noted in the attached briefing paper, which remain seriously troubling for our organizations.

The commitment to food safety is paramount for everyone involved in the agriculture industry. We have an obligation and commitment to produce a safe, nutritious product for domestic and international consumers, and that obligation is at the core of all that we do twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

We support Congress' efforts in strengthening the country's food- and animal feed-safety systems based upon sound science and a risk-based approach. Yet, H.R. 2749 contains provisions that would undermine our ability to provide a safe, affordable and abundant food supply. As drafted, this legislation would give the Food and Drug Administration duplicative authority for areas that are already overseen by other federal agencies. Furthermore, H.R. 2749 paints the entire food supply system with a very broad brush. Each segment of the food and agriculture spectrum is unique.

Collectively, our organizations have expressed major concerns over previous versions of the bill. Some of those concerns remain in H.R. 2749 and will be expressed separately. However, we feel strongly that the on-farm issues noted in the attachment warrant immediate attention and must be addressed prior to consideration of the bill in the full House of Representatives. We would be happy to meet with you at any time to discuss these concerns.

We look forward to working with you as Congress continues the development of food safety legislation.

Sincerely,

American Beekeeping Federation

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Soybean Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Sunflower Association
Pet Food Institute
US Canola Association
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council
USA Rice Federation

Cc: Collin Peterson

Frank Lucas