

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 4, 2013

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Senate Agriculture Committee
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Agriculture Committee
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Cochran:

Thank you for your continued leadership in moving the Farm Bill. As a final bill is written, we urge you to advocate vigorously for the adoption of the Senate's energy title, particularly the full \$900 million in mandatory funding for its "core" programs. Farm energy programs serve agriculture, rural communities and the entire nation by providing jobs, farm income and environmental benefits.

The Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee passed this title on a strong bipartisan basis, including mandatory funding, with only one strengthening amendment. The mandatory energy funding included within the Senate's Farm Bill represents less than one percent of total Farm Bill spending and represents a decrease in annual mandatory funding as compared to the 2008 Farm Bill. The Senate's bipartisan energy investments are responsible and well-balanced and should be kept in the conference agreement.

The energy title's core programs are very cost-effective job creators, accounting for more than tens of thousands of jobs saved or created over the last decade. They set conditions that allow farmers and innovative businesses to grow the rural economy, while also improving the environment and making America more energy independent.

For example, the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), supports nearly every form of renewable energy, as well as energy efficiency on farms, ranches, and at rural small businesses. REAP has funded projects in every state and benefits all agricultural sectors.


The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) partners with hundreds of farmers across 12 states to develop next-generation energy crops that produce sustainable biofuels, power generation, renewable chemicals, and biobased products. BCAP uniquely develops a new homegrown source of energy that can also provide conservation and water quality benefits while producing new farm income.

The Biorefinery Assistance Program (BAP) provides investment certainty for cutting-edge biorefineries that produce advanced biofuels from non-food sources. And, with important policy changes included within the Senate bill, this kind of investment certainty would be extended to the promising renewable chemicals manufacturing sector. In addition, the Biobased Markets program is expanding small business markets by leveraging the federal government's purchasing power to acquire thousands of new, sustainable domestic industrial bioproducts.

We are fully aware of the budget constraints placed upon agricultural committee leaders as a new Farm Bill is written. However, the Senate's bipartisan energy investments are a small fraction of total Farm Bill outlays and represent an important, and growing, component of the agricultural economy. We strongly urge you to ensure that the Senate-passed energy title, with the full \$900 million in mandatory funding, is included within the conference agreement.

Thank you very much for your continued support.

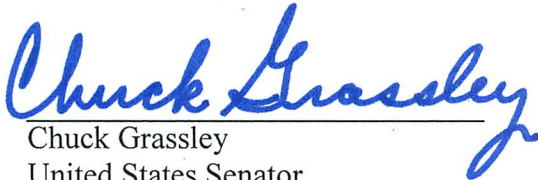
Sincerely,



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Chuck Grassley
United States Senator



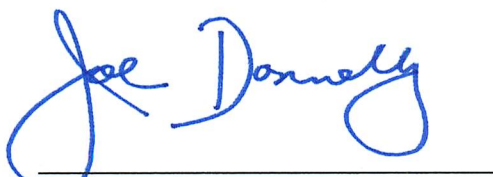
Al Franken
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



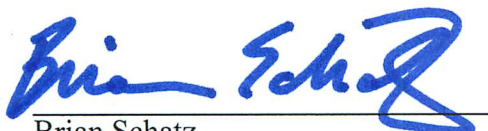
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



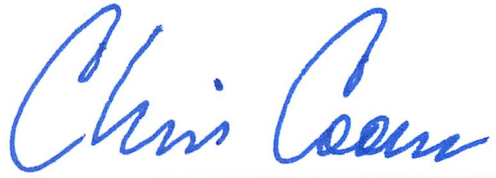
Joe Donnelly
United States Senator



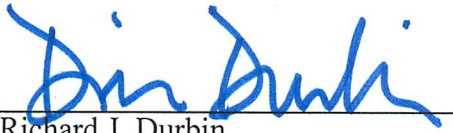
Tim Johnson
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Tom Harkin
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator