



November 21, 2011

The Honorable Fred Upton
House Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 1633 the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act

Dear Congressman Upton:

Imperial County Farm Bureau (ICFB) is a private, non-profit voluntary membership organization whose purpose is to protect and promote agricultural interests in Imperial County. ICFB represents approximately 800 members primarily farmers, ranchers, landowners and farm service providers within the Imperial County.

ICFB encourages your support of H.R. 1633 the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act. This bill would exclude from federal regulation nuisance farm dust that occurs naturally in the course of normal farming activities.

Imperial County is located 120 miles east of San Diego in a dry, arid desert valley along the Mexican Border. Due in part to occasional extreme wind events and high levels of transportation occurrences in neighboring Mexicali, Mexico, Imperial County is currently classified as serious non-attainment for fine particulate matter (PM¹⁰).

Seeking a proactive solution, in 2005 Imperial County farmers and ranchers implemented the Conservation Management Practices (CMPs) Plan requiring each farmer to apply one or more CMPs under the following categories: Land Preparation and Cultivation, Harvesting, Unpaved Roads and Unpaved Traffic Areas. CMPs include such practices as modifying equipment, speed limits on unpaved roads, hand harvesting, installing or planting wind barriers and graveling unpaved roads to name a few.

Although farmers and ranchers have made enormous strides to modify farming practices to reduce PM¹⁰ levels, regulators continually indicate that more will be needed. All of these

activities place heavier burdens and restrictions on farming practices, have economic consequences and still cannot guarantee that our area will be brought into attainment.

H.R. 1633 recognizes the great disparity in the coarse PM ambient air qualities levels from one part of the country to another and from rural to urban areas. By providing for state or local regulation of rural "nuisance dust" from farming areas, this bill allows management flexibility to deal with unique local circumstances such as those which contribute to our PM¹⁰ levels.

This bill provides a reasonable and common sense approach to control ambient air quality for coarse particulate matter while continuing to recognize the natural occurrence of farm dust while at the same time recognizing the public health mandate of the Clean Air Act. H.R. 1633 excludes "nuisance dust" from regulation, by allowing EPA to continue regulating man-made emissions of particulate matter, while at the same time not trying to regulate natural occurrences.

Therefore, ICFB respectfully requests your support of H.R. 1633 the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



Mark McBroom
President
Imperial County Farm Bureau