

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 1, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On July 18, 2013, the U.S. Senate requested a conference with the U.S. House of Representatives to resolve differences regarding H.R. 2642, legislation commonly known as the Farm Bill. We respectfully ask for your support in the naming of a Farm Bill conference committee before the House adjourns for the August recess.

As you know, the extension of the 2008 Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2013. Congress will be in session only 11 days before this expiration. It is imperative that conferees are named before the August recess to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of H.R. 2642. This will give conferees the time to prepare a conference report that can be passed by September 30. Without your consent to permit formal conference negotiations, neither the Senate nor House will name conferees. Consequently, our best opportunity to enact this legislation before the current law expires will be squandered.

Actions by members of the Republican Leadership, the Republican Conference, and outside conservative groups have demonstrated that they do not want a conference committee to begin its work, preferring instead no Farm Bill at all. But hundreds of groups representing a broad range of issues with different and often conflicting priorities agree on one thing: it is now time to work together in regular order through the conference committee process, find bipartisan compromise and finish the Farm Bill.

Additionally, as a practical matter, since a conference report must be signed by a majority of members from both the House and Senate, knowing who will be appointed conferees is needed to determine what kind of agreement is even possible. Given the length of time the House and Senate Agriculture Committees have been working on a Farm Bill, we have a clear picture of the issues that need to be resolved and staff-level negotiations will only accomplish so much. It is time to bring Members of Congress together to make the tough choices necessary to get a Farm Bill that can be passed by Congress and signed by the President.

The Honorable John Boehner
Page 2
August 1, 2013

We remain confident that if you would support beginning formal conference committee negotiations, Members of Congress would respond enthusiastically to returning to regular order, and conferees would put their August recess to good use by agreeing to a conference report that could be voted upon by both the House and Senate in September. Doing so will restore public confidence and prove that it is possible for Congress to meet its responsibilities to the American people.

We look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Rep. Timothy J. Walz

Rep. Mike McIntyre

Rep. David Scott



Rep. Kurt Schrader

Rep. James P. McGovern

Rep. Marcia L. Fudge



Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham



Rep. Ann McLane Kuster

Rep. Richard M. Nolan

Rep. Pete P. Gallego