

May 14, 2018

Dear Members of Congress:

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of people across the country who care about clean water, write to urge you to protect our nation's water supplies through robust and effective support for conservation programs and policies as you are writing the 2018 Farm Bill. The next Farm Bill should further efforts to reduce the threat nutrient pollution poses to clean water and ensure farmers and ranchers have the tools they need to be leading stewards of our shared water resources.

Conservation practices can go a long way toward protecting our water sources, and Farm Bill conservation programs offer an opportunity to give producers the financial and technical assistance needed to put those practices in place. Cover crops, conservation tillage practices, buffer strips, manure and livestock management, wetland restoration, and conservation crop rotations are just a few examples of water-friendly practices that help protect water at the source, usually at a lower cost than that incurred by downstream communities, water utilities, and rate payers to clean polluted water. That is why it is crucial to write a strong Farm Bill for conservation.

We ask that as you consider the next Farm Bill, you support the following priorities for a water-friendly 2018 Farm Bill:

**Funding:** Increase funding for the conservation title to support critical working lands, partnership, and easement programs that help to reduce nutrient pollution, protect source water, and protect water quality and availability.

**Conservation Compliance:** Protect the linkage between basic conservation requirements and crop insurance and ensure that Sodsaver and Swampbuster provisions stay in place to keep soil out of our waterways and protect wetlands that provide critical water storage and filtration functions.

**Access:** Increase access, through funding, technical assistance, and outreach, to Farm Bill conservation and related programs that put conservation tools in the hands of the people and communities who need them most.

**Targeting:** Encourage greater targeting of funds towards areas that need it the most and towards conservation practices that are most effective at protecting drinking water sources and water quality in the places where it is most threatened.

**Conservation Outcomes:** Improve measurement, reporting, and evaluation of conservation program outcomes to provide data on the impact of conservation programs and practices on water quality outcomes.

**Crop Insurance and Water Quality:** Create incentives for, and eliminate barriers to, water-friendly agricultural practices within the Federal Crop Insurance Program.

The next Farm Bill must invest in clean water by ensuring that farmers and ranchers have the tools they need to be conservation leaders and protect our nation's shared water resources. To do so, we believe the next Farm Bill must reflect these shared principles and invest in clean water.

Additionally, we urge you to reject any attempts to add anti-environmental provisions to the Farm Bill, as it must not serve as a vehicle for changes that run counter to the goal of protecting and enhancing our shared water resources.

Thank you,

21st Century Youth Leadership Movement

AFGE LOCAL 3354

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Alliance for the Great Lakes

American Rivers

American Society of Landscape Architects

American Sustainable Business Council

Bluestem Communications

Clean Water Action

Coalition to SAVE the Menominee River, Inc.

Concerned Citizens of Big Bay

Concerned Citizens of Cattaraugus County

Connecticut Food System Alliance

Conservation Minnesota

Cottage House Inc.

Earthjustice

Ecology Center

Endangered Habitats League

Endangered Species Coalition

Environment America

Environment Erie

Environment Iowa  
Environment Minnesota  
Environment Virginia  
Environmental Law & Policy Center  
Environmental Working Group  
Fairland Farmers Market  
Family Farm Defenders  
Farms Not Arms  
Freshwater Future  
Friends of Pool 2  
Friends of Schlitz Audubon Nature Center  
Friends of the Earth  
Friends of the Mississippi River  
Friends of the St. Joe River Association  
Genesee County Hispanic Latino Collaborative  
Genesee Valley Audubon Society  
Great Rivers Habitat Alliance  
GreenLatinos  
Hartford Food System, Inc  
Headwaters Chapter Izaak Walton League  
Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition  
Hip Hop Caucus  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters - USA-JPIC  
Hoosier Environmental Council  
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
IHM Sisters Justice, Peace and Sustainability Office  
Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited  
Illinois PIRG

Illinois Stewardship Alliance  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Lake Erie Foundation  
League of Conservation Voters  
League of Women Voters United States  
Maryland Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association  
Michiana Watershed  
Michigan Wildlife Conservancy  
Midwest Environmental Advocates  
Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc.  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America  
Montana Audubon  
Montana Conservation Voters  
Montana Trout Unlimited  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
Nathan Murphy  
National Family Farm Coalition  
National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Heritage Institute  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nature Abounds  
Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council  
North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project  
Northflow LLC

Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance  
Ohio Environmental Council  
Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project  
Operation Spring Plant, Inc  
Oregon Environmental Council  
Peace Roots Alliance  
PennEnvironment  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Pointes Protection Association  
PUSH Buffalo  
Religious Coalition for the Great Lakes  
River Raisin Institute  
Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecropper, Inc  
Rural Coalition  
Rural Community Assistance Partnership  
Save EPA  
Save Lake Superior Association  
Save Our Sky Blue Waters  
Save The Dunes Conservation Fund, INC.  
Save The River / Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper  
Sierra Club  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Global Environment Committee  
Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education, Inc.  
Superior Rivers Watershed Association  
Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville  
Sustainable Resource Alliance  
Tennessee Clean Water Network  
Texas Mexico Border Coalition CBO

The Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc.

Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation

Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition

US PIRG

Virginia Conservation Network

Virginia League of Conservation Voters

West Michigan Environmental Action Council

Wisconsin Metro Audubon Society

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

WISPIRG

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve