

November 19, 2013

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Lucas, Chairwoman Stabenow, and Ranking Members Peterson and Cochran:

The undersigned farm organizations commend your efforts to conclude Conference negotiations on the 2013 Farm Bill in time for enactment this year. This important legislation is long overdue, and is urgently needed to provide certainty to farmers, ranchers, rural America, and consumers around the country.

Our organizations have different views on various issues regarding the commodity title, including which payment acres should be established for price and revenue programs in Title I. Various arguments have been presented on both side of this debate, and while we will not go into these details, it is important to know that, without a solution, we see a likely extension of the 2008 Farm Bill.

In the interest of finding common ground on this issue, we offer a compromise that would allow us all to move forward. We propose using the average of planted acres during the five years previous to the current year as the payment base for both the revenue and the price programs. The average would move forward, adding and dropping a year every year, in order to remain as current as possible without including the current year, which would serve as a deterrent to building base. Consideration should be given to how effective revenue protection can be provided at both the farm and county levels under this approach.

We believe this novel approach addresses both the needs and the concerns of farmers growing all program crops in all regions of the country. We offer it as a solution which, while not the first choice of any of our organizations, is a compromise we can all support and which can help move the farm bill process to a successful conclusion.

Sincerely yours,

American Soybean Association
National Corn Growers Association
U.S. Canola Association

cc Speaker John Boehner
Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
Majority Leader Harry Reid
Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
Members, Committee on Agriculture, U.S. House of Representatives
Members, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, U.S. Senate