

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2025

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
Chairman
House Agriculture Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Angie Craig
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Craig,

We write to you as members of the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition (SEEC) Climate and Agriculture Task Force to urge you to maintain and increase support for farmers in climate-resilient conservation efforts through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) critical climate-smart agriculture programs in the upcoming Farm Bill negotiations. The investments we make now are a downpayment for the future success of generations of American farmers and will help safeguard our farmers, ranchers, and foresters at the front lines of the extreme weather and climate chaos we are facing today.

America's farmers are no stranger to climate and weather-associated production risks. In 2024 alone, our farmers experienced a staggering \$20.3 billion in economic losses for crops and rangelands from major extreme weather events. Specifically, drought, excessive heat, and wildfires alone accounted for over [\\$11 billion in damages](#) to the agricultural sector in a single year. Simultaneously, federal crop insurance payments over the last two decades have soared to [\\$143.5 billion](#), with two thirds of that amount stemming from drought and excessive moisture that are exacerbated from climate change.

The next Farm Bill represents a significant opportunity to strengthen climate-resilience for America's farms. USDA's voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs help producers adopt agriculture practices to both adapt to and mitigate extreme weather and climate change. These practices have a variety of benefits ranging from building soil health, water use efficiency, while simultaneously increasing crop yields and farm revenues, making USDA programs a true win-win. We have witnessed what happens when we meet this robust demand with historic federal investments for our farmers, and we must continue this critical support for our rural economies to ensure that our nation's producers can thrive.

1. Support USDA's Conservation Reserve Program

The USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is one of the most effective and successful tools for protecting America's farmland. By providing farmers with annual rental payments to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production for conservation, CRP has helped prevent more than [9 billion tons of soil erosion](#) since its inception in 1985. Conservation

practices promoted by the program help improve soil health, enhance carbon sequestration, reduce nutrient runoff into our waterways, create critical habitat for pollinators and wildlife, all while bolstering overall agricultural productivity. While left out of previous negotiations for our farmers, it is critical the next Farm Bill further supports programs like CRP so that our farmers can receive the much-needed financial support for protecting healthy farms in America.

2. Support and Improve USDA's Conservation Practice Standards

USDA's Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) provide America's farmers and ranchers with the guidelines that ensure they can utilize proven, science-based tools to address specific on-farm conservation goals related to soil health, water conservation, drought tolerance, resiliency, and more. USDA's standards help ensure that conservation practices on our farms are consistent, measurable, and backed by research, yet flexible enough to adapt to different landscapes and farm operations. Our farmers are actively deploying innovative technologies and practices — such as precision agriculture, advanced soil monitoring, smart irrigation, and more — to achieve greater farm efficiency, resilience, and land stewardship. The next Farm Bill should address the dual goals of conservation and innovation by providing a streamlined process to continually review and update our conservation practice standards to reflect the new technologies at play in the farm conservation space.

3. Modernize Crop Insurance for America's Farmers

Crop insurance serves as a critical lifeline for America's farmers as our nation faces more severe droughts, floods, and extreme weather. Yet, as it stands, our crop insurance policies are unable to effectively meet today's escalating weather and climate risks. Without adequate coverage, a single climate-driven disaster can erase years of financial investments, driving small to mid-sized farms to bankruptcy, and deeply damaging the rural communities that rely on agricultural stability. Modernizing crop insurance to account for elevated climate risks and to allow for the deployment of innovative tools and practices is essential to not only safeguarding our farmers' livelihoods, but also building a safe and resilient American food supply chain. Such modernization should include flexible coverage options, faster payouts, and proper incentives that balance out the risks inherent with adopting novel tools and practices.

4. Expand USDA Conservation Technical Assistance

Expanding USDA's conservation technical assistance in the upcoming Farm Bill will be a key way to ensure that the tools and knowledge our farmers need to build resilience aren't just available on paper, they're accessible in the field where they matter the most. USDA field staff and conservation specialists provide essential, on-the-ground guidance—helping our farmers implement soil health improvements, integrate drought-tolerant crops, upgrade irrigation systems, and access programs such as CRP. Yet, we and our farmers know all too well the staffing shortages and limited outreach capacity facing the USDA currently. The upcoming Farm Bill must address this issue and help the Department increase funding for technical assistance, train more conservation professionals, and improve technical assistance access to more rural communities in America.

We at SEEC's Climate and Agriculture Task Force are committed to working with you to ensure this Farm Bill includes the essential resources needed to give our farmers the necessary tools to

mitigate and adapt to climate change. We look forward to engaging with the House Agriculture Committee to incorporate the feedback of the millions of American producers who are demanding the Farm Bill reflect the very real climate impacts they are facing on the ground today.

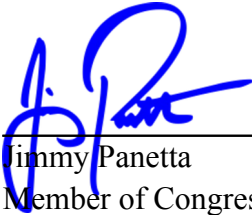
Sincerely,



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Climate & Agriculture Task Force
Co-Chair



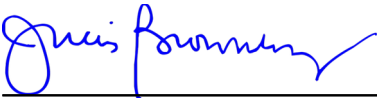
Chellie Pingree
Climate & Agriculture Task Force
Co-Chair



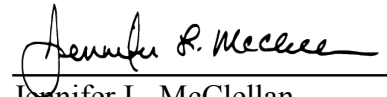
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress