

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chair
Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable Glenn “GT” Thompson
Chair
House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee

April 20, 2023

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chairman Thompson, and Ranking Member Scott:

The undersigned organizations are united in our goal to improve investments in conservation that benefit both the environment and farm and forest economics. We applaud the many programs that your committees have created in service of these goals, and we strongly support maintaining the robust level of funding they have received to date.

The 2023 Farm Bill provides an opportunity to enhance these existing programs through provisions that seek to meet targeted needs identified through our interactions with producers and others in the agricultural sector. These include helping producers increase productivity, achieve environmental goals, and gain economic benefits from implementing practices that help mitigate climate change. Below are high-level recommendations that we jointly support to meet those needs:

Maintain conservation funding

Existing conservation funding is crucial to both producers and the environment and should be maintained. For example, existing conservation programs are funding projects to improve soil health and climate resilience while improving farm economics through investments in climate-beneficial practices – these kinds of projects are key investments in farms’ environmental and economic longevity.

Improve biomass conservation research

Interest in using biomass from farm and forest ecosystems has increased in recent years, from biofuels to biomass carbon removal and storage (BiCRS) projects like biomass energy with carbon capture and sequestration (BECCS), biochar, and other bioproducts. These projects provide an opportunity to improve farm economics by improving productivity and creating new revenue streams while providing environmentally beneficial products to consumers and, in many instances, improving the management of biomass that might otherwise contribute to climate change (such as forest fuel loads that can exacerbate wildfires, or agricultural waste that may otherwise decompose and release CO₂ to the atmosphere). We propose USDA and the Forest Service research this space to provide more concrete information for producers, including the greenhouse gas and environmental impacts of removing different amounts of biomass from both natural and actively managed systems, the impacts of applying biochar on soil, measurement

and modeling improvements for soil carbon, and other aspects of supply chain sustainability, including options to trace the sourcing of biomass from field to end product.

Expedite implementation of new conservation practices

America's agricultural producers are constantly innovating to find ways to improve yields, products, and conservation outcomes, such as soil health. As new conservation practices (from applying basalt to fields to next-generation feed supplements) are developed and come into use, however, it can take years for the practices to be adopted by USDA and included as practices that are eligible for funding by the USDA conservation programs, such as EQIP. We propose that USDA expedite the review, adoption, and implementation of new practices, and where possible, prioritize the review of practices that have a positive impact on soil carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.

Thank you for the opportunity to give input on this important Farm Bill. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations in further detail, and we look forward to working together with you to support agriculture and conservation.

Sincerely,

Ben Rubin
Executive Director
Carbon Business Council

Giana Amador
Executive Director
Carbon Removal Alliance

Peter Reinhardt
CEO & Co-founder
Charm Industrial

Kathy Fallon
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