

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 24, 2017

The Honorable K. Michael Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Conaway and Ranking Member Peterson:


We write to you today to draw your attention to the importance of a robust Energy Title in the next Farm Bill. Since the Farm Bill was authorized, on farm income has dropped over 50 percent; however, the industrial biotechnology and renewable sectors have provided new opportunities for producers to maximize their revenue while creating thousands of jobs in rural communities.

Innovative programs like the Biobased Market Program “Biopreferred” (BMP), Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program (BAP), Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), and other programs offered through the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) have all provided positive benefits to rural America along every link of the value chain. Substantive improvements would greatly expand the programs’ reach even more. Improvements to allow for the full support of renewable chemical facilities irrespective of fuels production and biomass utilization from farms and forests are a few examples that can expand upon the more than \$390 billion the biobased economy already contributes to the U.S. economy.

As technological advances in the industrial biotechnology sector improve, facilities like the National Corn to Ethanol Research facility at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville in Edwardsville, Illinois and the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute in Waseca, Minnesota will play an important part in discovering, and enhancing, the commercial feasibility of such advances. It is imperative that BMP, BAP, REAP, BCAP, and NIFA and AFRI programs and grants remain available for entrepreneurs who wish to keep the U.S. at the cutting edge of industrial biotechnology and updated to reflect the new innovations and technologies in this space.

We ask that the programs which are mentioned above are given all due consideration as the House Committee on Agriculture continues to draft the next Farm Bill.

Sincerely,



Mike Bost
Member of Congress



Tim Walz
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Roger Marshall
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



Steve King
Member of Congress



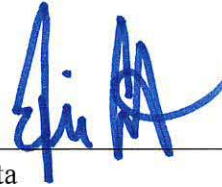
Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



John J. Faso
Member of Congress



Rodney Davis
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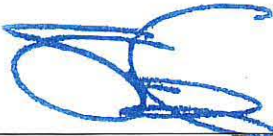
Jim Costa
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Richard M. Nolan
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Sean Patrick Maloney
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