

February 19, 2019

Dear House and Senate Budget Committee Chairmen and Ranking Members:

As Congress develops and considers its budget proposals for the year, **we respectfully urge you to protect crop insurance** and recognize its central importance to farmers, lenders and all of rural America.

USDA has projected that 2018 farm profitability will be lower than it has been in over a decade, and farm income dropped more than 45% in five years. An overreliance on budget savings from the agriculture community and from crop insurance will unquestionably undermine rural economies. It's also important to note that in a time of uncertainty in the farming and ranching community – from natural disasters to trade disputes to government shutdowns – the public-private partnership that is crop insurance has been a consistent and reliable risk management tool. The certainty of federal crop insurance also offers lenders the assurances they need to continue to provide capital to America's hard-working farmers and ranchers.

The 2018 Farm Bill that was recently passed by Congress and signed by the President continued the emphasis on risk management from previous farm bills, and in doing so, protects the interests of American taxpayers. Farmers spend \$3.5 to \$4 billion per year of their own money to purchase insurance from the private sector. On average, farmers also must incur losses of almost 30 percent before their insurance coverage pays an indemnity. Crop insurance allows producers to customize their policies to their individual farm and financial needs. Federal crop insurance is based on fundamental market principles, which means higher risk areas and higher value crops pay higher premiums for insurance.

Cuts to crop insurance during this difficult time for rural America should be avoided. Farmers and lawmakers agree that crop insurance is a linchpin of the farm safety net and is crucial to the economic and food security of rural America. The importance of crop insurance was just reaffirmed less than two months ago with the passage and signing of the 2018 Farm Bill, and **we urge you to oppose cuts to crop insurance during this year's budget process.**

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Agri-Women  
American Association of Crop Insurers  
American Bankers Association  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Farmland Trust  
American Malting Barley Association  
American Property Casualty Insurance Association  
American Pulse Association  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Sesame Growers Association  
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers  
American Soybean Association  
American Sugar Alliance  
American Sugarbeet Growers Association

Association of Equipment Manufacturers  
Corn Refiners Association  
Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau  
Crop Insurance Professionals Association  
Ducks Unlimited  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Farm Credit Council  
Independent Community Bankers of America  
Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America  
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies  
National Association of Professional Insurance Agents  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Crop Insurance Services  
National Farmers Union  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Peach Council  
National Potato Council  
National Rural Lenders Association  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sunflower Association  
Panhandle Peanut Growers Association  
Pheasants Forever  
Quail Forever  
Rural & Agricultural Council of America  
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Canola Association  
U.S. Dry Bean Council  
U.S. Durum Growers Association  
U.S. Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
USA Rice  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United States Cattlemen's Association  
Western Growers  
Western Peanut Growers Association  
Women Involved in Farm Economics