

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 26, 2018

Mr. William Beam  
Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Beam,

We write to urge you to reconsider your decision rejecting a winter waiver request regarding the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) for Montana producers related to losses in the winter of 2017-2018. While we appreciate that the United States Department of Agriculture has begun to consider a potential revision to allow losses caused by longer weather events to be eligible for LIP, that does not help those who faced substantial losses this past winter.

Livestock loss claims were estimated to be 11,000 calves, more than 1,500 adult bulls and cows, and more than 1,000 other livestock animals. These are only the claims that are filed; many others have found the LIP program very difficult to successfully participate in and did not file claims.

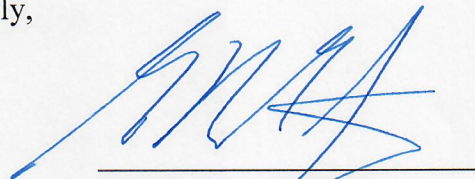
As you know, the LIP plays an integral role in helping producers recover from excessive losses due to adverse weather. The winter of 2017-2018 in Montana was particularly severe and most of the losses did not occur due to any single event. While we appreciate your acknowledgement that lack of accurate weather information impedes the application process, National Weather Service data from Glasgow, Montana, shows that the entire month of January, 26 of 28 days of February, and 16 of 31 days in March the high temperature was below freezing. Low temperatures were below 0 for 38 of 89 days, touching a low of -31. These conditions resulted in millions of dollars of losses for Montana producers. The LIP is designed to help with such losses and we ask you to reconsider your position regarding the request to consider this past winter as a qualifying event.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to continuing to work with you to assist Montana farmers and ranchers on this and other critical issues.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator



GREG GIANFORTE  
United States Representative