

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

July 12, 2021

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

We write regarding the severe drought Montana is currently facing and the need to ensure Montana farmers and ranchers receive the relief necessary to maintain their crops, livestock, and livelihoods. In particular, we urge you to support Governor Greg Gianforte's request to designate all counties in Montana as primary natural disaster areas due to drought conditions throughout the state. Additionally, we request you immediately allow for emergency haying and grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage in the state and provide necessary flexibilities to ensure Montana producers can utilize all the tools necessary to manage this significant drought.

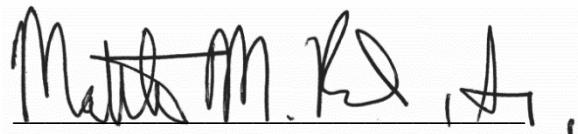
As you know, over 90% of Montana is facing drought conditions with eastern Montana significantly impacted. Designating Montana counties as primary natural disaster areas will ensure Montana farmers and ranchers can access critical resources and USDA programs to manage these challenging conditions. Additionally, authorizing emergency haying and grazing on CRP lands will help Montana ranchers provide additional forage for their livestock and we urge you to ensure that producers have sufficient time and flexibility to hay and bale viable CRP land in response to this drought.

Given the severe conditions on the ground in Montana, we urge swift action and approval of these requests and for USDA to provide all appropriate disaster relief to Montana producers. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to continuing to work with you on important issues affecting Montana farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines  
United States Senator



Matthew Rosendale, Sr.  
Member of Congress