

August 31, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Michael Conaway
Chairman
House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow, and Ranking Member Peterson,

We write today on behalf of agricultural and municipal water users to thank you for your work and leadership on H.R. 2 the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018. We support your good work to improve the health of our nation's forests and grasslands and we ask that you continue to advocate for strong forest health programs in the upcoming conference process.

The entities signed on to this letter represent farmers, local governments, national water organizations, state water associations, individual water and power providers, and both agricultural and municipal water users. Collectively, this group provides water to more than 50 million Americans. As you know the water supply for much of our nation is directly affected by the health of our forested lands. The Agriculture and Nutrition Act contains key forestry provisions that benefit water users.

The forested lands of the United States play a vital role in the water supply that much of our nation depends on. Healthy forests and grasslands provide a myriad of watershed, ecosystem, and recreation benefits. In a healthy forest ecosystem wildfire can be a natural, regenerative force. Unfortunately, throughout much of the United States our forests are not healthy. This is particularly true in the Western United States. The Agriculture and Nutrition Act presents an excellent opportunity to advance the health of our nation's forests and protect critical watersheds.

Improving our nation's forest and grassland health will benefit countless communities, families that rely on the food grown by our nation's farmers, and critical ecosystems that have been ravaged by catastrophic wildfires.

We look forward to working with the Conference Committee to build on its good work to improve forest health during further consideration of this legislation.

We appreciate your leadership on the many issues facing our nation's agricultural producers and stand ready to assist you in securing final passage of the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018.

Sincerely,

National Water Resources Association
Agribusiness and Water Council of Arizona
Association of California Water Agencies
Colorado Water Congress
Montana Water Users Association
Nebraska Water Resources Association
Washington State Water Resources Association
Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District
Colorado River Water Conservation District
Placer County Water Agency
Salt River Project
San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District
Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3
Southwestern Water Conservation District
Trinity River Authority of Texas